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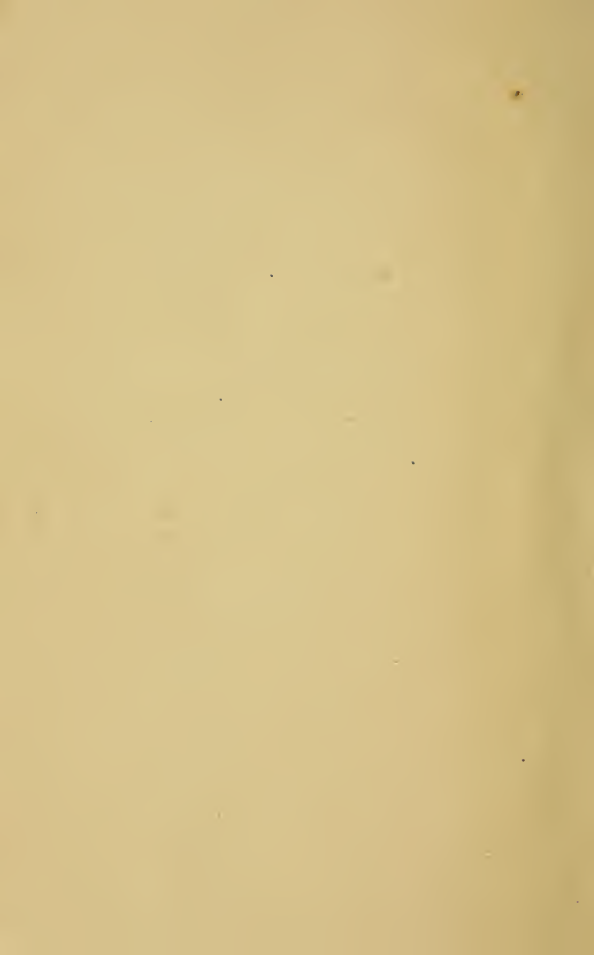
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The mirror of the Gospel

Number

Sanford A. Smith.





THE
MIRROR OF THE GOSPEL,

BY

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The Author of the "Lever of the Gospel," the "Telescope of the Gospel," the "Telegraph of the Gospel," and the "Magnet of the Gospel," &c.

IF ANY BE A HEARER OF THE WORD, AND NOT A DOER, HE IS LIKE UNTO A MAN BEHOLDING HIS NATURAL FACE IN A GLASS: FOR HE BEHOLDETH HIMSELF, AND GOETH HIS WAY, AND STRAIGHTWAY FORGETTETH WHAT MANNER OF MAN HE WAS. BUT WHOSO LOOKETH INTO THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY, AND CONTINUETH THEREIN, HE BEING NOT A FORGETFUL HEARER, BUT A DOER OF THE WORK, THIS MAN SHALL BE BLESSED IN HIS DEED. JAMES I, 23—25.

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THE MIRROR OF THE GOSPEL.

SOUTHEY, in his "Omniana," says, "When I was last at ———, a nun made her escape from an Irish nunnery. The first thing for which she inquired when she reached the house in which she was to be secreted, was a mirror or looking glass. She had entered the convent when only five years old, and from that time had never seen her own face." Man in his unconverted state is a prisoner in the convent of sin. In his renewed state he is a *freeman* in Christ Jesus. This happy change is wrought in men by the gospel. By whomsoever experienced, it is manifested in an anxious solicitude to become acquainted with their real state and character,—to make Christ the foundation of their hopes, the motive of their obedience, the source of their bliss, and to set forth the wonders of his love and the triumphs of his grace. As these things are most minutely and fully set before them in the gospel, to it they conceive the strongest attachment; and surveying themselves in the gospel as in a mirror or glass, they tremble, rejoice, and adore.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL.

IN the Mirror of the Gospel we see its nature. Is the enquiry made, what is the gospel? It is a revelation of the favour of God to fallen man through a Mediator. It is a stupendous scheme of mercy devised by God, in the counsels of his love, from the ages of eternity, to recover man from the depths of that ruin into which he has plunged himself by his departure from God, to the possession of his glorious image, and to the hope of that heaven where he dwells. It is a gracious message from God to man to cease his strife with his Maker, to seek an interest in his favour and love, and in all the invaluable and imperishable blessings of his grace. It is a train of light put in motion to disperse the deep darkness of our world, to illumine the souls of men with the light of life, and to dispel the gloom and terrors which hang over the grave. It is the bread of life to feed the famishing and perishing multitudes of the world—the living and life-giving bread which alone can cause the bodies and souls of men to

delight themselves in fatness, and enable them to live for ever. It is the fountain of life in the midst of this desert world, from which streams of life flow forth to refresh the minds of men, to irrigate their spirits, and to cause the plants of faith, hope, and grace to spring up, to flourish in all their rich luxuriance and beauty, and to bear fruit in abundance, to the praise of redeeming mercy and love,—fruit of the best, richest, and sweetest kind,—fruit

“ More fragrant than Arabia sacrific’d,
And all her spicy mountains in a flame.”

It is a divine remedy to expel the poison of sin, to counteract its fatal tendency, to cure its maladies, and to impart spiritual life and health.

“ A heavenly balm, whose sovereign power
Can guilty, ruined man restore.”

This gospel is called the gospel of the grace of God. It is the offspring of the divine favour and love. It discloses his mercy to sinful men; it lays open the channel through which it flows; and it directs to the special agency of that grace, whose high prerogative it is to enlighten, convince, convert, purify, govern, and bless.

It is called the gospel of Christ. He is the meritorious cause of salvation. In the sacrifice

of himself on the cross, he made an atonement for sin,—an atonement which satisfied the claims of infinite justice, and expiates the guilt of sin,—an atonement which reconciles the rebel man to his offended Maker, God; and effects his redemption from death to life, and from woe to bliss,—an atonement that every man requires, and without an interest in which, all men must perish. By his perfect obedience he embodies the character of God, upholds the rights of the divine government, procures the favour of God for guilty man, and gives him a title to the boundless, blissful, and glorious inheritance of heaven. And through the dignity of his person he stamps his work with an infinitude of value to man, and renders it well-pleasing to God.

Christ is the effectual cause of salvation. In his rising from the dead, he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. By his departure to heaven he prepares for them mansions of repose, crowns of life, thrones of bliss, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and all those bright and bursting glories which language was not invented to describe, or finite minds formed to grasp. And through his unfailing advocacy within the veil, he secures the agency of the Spirit to work in men the blessings of repent-

ance and faith, holiness and love, to give them a foretaste of heaven, and to introduce them to the fulness of its happiness and bliss.

Christ is the subject matter of salvation. The gospel records the history of Christ. It speaks of his birth, temptation in the wilderness, victory over Satan, his great and wonderful miracles, his agony and bloody sweat, his awful crucifixion and death, his glorious resurrection, his triumphant entrance into heaven, and his never-failing intercessions in the courts of bliss. It sets him forth as our representative, surety, and sacrifice,—prophet, priest, and king,—mediator, saviour, and redeemer,—judge, advocate, and friend. He is the sum and substance of the gospel, the alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last.

It is called the gospel of salvation. It describes the nature of salvation. This consists in a freedom from the curse, power, and love of sin, and in the enjoyment of pardon, peace, grace, knowledge, happiness, and eternal life. It tells us that salvation has been provided for the ruined and the lost. This is the burden of its news—*God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth*

in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. What intelligence can be so cheering to sinful men? Ought it not to fill our souls with transport, and to light them up with a flame of love to God?

“ Waft, waft, ye winds, the story,
And you, ye waters, roll ;
Till like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole.”

It lays open the way by which this salvation can be obtained. This is the blood, and righteousness, and grace of Jesus Christ. The blood of Christ pardons, the righteousness of Christ promotes men, and the grace of Christ subdues their corruptions, qualifies them for the enjoyment of the divine favour and love, and makes them meet for an inheritance of grace and glory ; *an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.* The blood of Christ has been shed. His everlasting righteousness has been wrought out, and brought in. And his grace has been promised to all who will not fail to implore it.

There is no way by which we can escape the deep dark waves of perdition, obtain the favour of God, or find our way to heaven, but through the mediation, death, and redemption of Jesus

Christ. To secure to men a full, free, and everlasting salvation, Christ came from the bosom of the Father, passed through the ranks of the angelic hosts, threw open the pearly gates of bliss, approached this lower world, and entered this province of his dominions. As God he could not suffer. He could only suffer as man. A body like unto our own was therefore prepared for him, that in our nature he might die. This nature he assumed on his appearance in our world. In that nature he travelled through scenes of suffering and blood whilst on earth, and offered himself up to God on the cross *as a lamb without blemish or spot*. In that nature he arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and seated himself at the right hand of the Father. And in that nature he ever liveth as our Great High Priest, to plead our cause—to secure our acceptance with Jehovah by virtue of his merits, which like the cloud of incense rises before the eternal throne,—and to bear us to his triumphant kingdom above.

Has Christ become incarnate and died for man, the creature's sin? Yes.

“The sun beheld it.—No, the shocking scene
Drove back his chariot; midnight veiled his face.

Not such as this : not such as nature makes :
A midnight nature shuddered to behold !
A midnight new ! a dread eclipse, without
Opposing spheres,—from her Creator's frown.
Sun ! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain ; or start
At that enormous load of human guilt ?
Which bowed his blessed head ; o'erwhelm'd his cross ;
Made groan the centre ; burst earth's marble womb
With pangs—strange pangs ! delivered of her dead !
Hell howl'd ; and heaven that hour let fall a tear !
Heaven wept that men might smile ! Heaven bled
That man might never die ! ”——

The work is done. The great transaction is past. It was accomplished in that dread hour, when in strains of celestial harmony from Calvary's cross, the shout of victory ascended,—*It is finished !* Angels heard it, and their harps with dulcet notes pealed around for joy. Devils caught its sound, and were filled with confusion and dismay.

Redemption's plan is now wrought out. A way of access is laid open to God. Man's sins can now be pardoned,—man's person adopted into the royal line of heaven,—and his happiness for ever secured ; and that in a way the most glorious that can be conceived,—a way levelled to the meanest capacity, and combined with such a depth in the contrivance as surpasses the comprehension of finite minds. This is the

complete work of Jesus Christ. It brings glory to God, and imparts happiness to men. Jesus, being God as well as man, made a complete atonement for sin, honoured God's insulted law, and sustained the wrath of God for guilty man. His mediation has been crowned with acceptance, the curse departs, and the blessing now descends. The lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed. The voice of Omnipotence is now heard to exclaim, *Deliver from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom.* O ! what a miracle of grace. What a climax of wonders is exhibited here. *Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.*

“ Lord, we adore thy ways
To bring us near to God,
Thy sovereign power, thy healing grace,
And thine atoning blood.”

It shows the means by which this salvation is to be attained. This is, faith in Jesus Christ. The unchangeable order of the gospel is, *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* On the hinge of faith hang the eternal destinies of the human race. *He that believeth*

on the Son shall have everlasting life; but he that believeth not shall not see life, for the wrath of God abideth on him. How important therefore is belief in the testimony of the Son of God! Do I believe in Jesus Christ? Reader! dost thou believe in Jesus Christ? Believe in Him, and you are free from condemnation. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* No, none. None in health. None in sickness. None in prosperity. None in adversity. None in life. None in death. None at Sinai. None at the judgment seat of Christ. None in time. None for ever. Receive Christ by faith, and you are safe, whatever storms may come upon you in life. The Lord will be your *refuge from the storm, and shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is against the wall.* Make Christ your hope and trust, and rely upon him as the firm and eternal rock of your salvation, and your happiness is for ever secure: *I give unto them eternal life, saith Christ, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* They will therefore never be stranded on the shores

of eternity, or founder and perish. Before the rich gale of atoning merit they will be borne triumphantly to the coasts of bliss, and brought to anchor in the haven of everlasting rest and joy. But turn away from Christ, and you close the only door whence you could hope to gain the favour of God on earth, to pass through the pearly gates of the heavenly city in your departure from this world, or to feast on immortal pleasures which flow from beneath the throne of God. Reject the Saviour, and you subject yourselves to the divine displeasure here, and expose yourselves to eternal misery hereafter. Neglect to seek an interest in him, and you are like a ship at sea without rudder or ballast. You may dance for awhile on the foaming billows of life, but at length you will sink down into the darkness of everlasting night.

It brings before us the fulness and freeness of the blessings of salvation to all them that believe. A traveller whilst walking at the base of a lofty mountain, met with a man with whom he entered into conversation. On asking him who was the richest man in that neighbourhood, he said, Mr. Marshall. The traveller observed, Are not you mistaken? The man replied, No. The traveller continued, saying, I believe you are. The

man looked at him very earnestly, whilst at the same time he asked him, Who is richer than he? The traveller told him that the Christian man was the richest man. He can say *All things are mine; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come!* Can Mr. Marshall say so? The man brightened in his countenance as he exclaimed, You beat me; I did not think of that. *All things are his.* Yes. Through the mediation, and death, and all-prevalent intercessions of Jesus Christ, blessings of the first magnitude, and most delightful character, infinite in value, and eternal in duration, are secured to the humble believer in Christ Jesus. The blessings of the gospel are also free, free as the air that we breathe, as the light of heaven, and as the stream that gushes from the mountain rock, and leaps from rock to rock, forcing its way into the deep valley beneath. Its language is, *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.—Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the waters of life freely.*

Heaven's sovereign blessings,
Clustering from the cross,
Rush on us, and close us round.
The prisoners of amaze.

It frees them from the dominion of sin, and the pollution of sin,—the love of sin, and the

practice of sin. It implants in them the immortal principles of truth, holiness, and love. It beautifies and adorns them with the image of Christ. It gives them a sweet foretaste of the fruits of Paradise—the bliss of eternity, and places them secure in the enjoyment of its peerless glories, and perennial streams of happiness and bliss. Myriads have experienced it, and are loud in its praise. Multitudes on earth are yielding themselves to its influence, and with enkindling enthusiasm are looking forwards to the period when they will realise the consummation of their wishes. With what glowing rapture will they welcome the glad moment, when unloosed from the prison house of the body, their happy spirits shall

Spread their glad wings, and soar away
To mansions of eternal day.

O ! what a treasure is the gospel. In the northern regions of our country, there is an abundance of treasures to be found in the bowels of the earth, such as coal, iron, and lead ; but what are these when compared with the vast and inexhaustible treasures which are to be found in the mine of the gospel ? It is a boon which ought never to be thought of but with tides of joy, never to be mentioned but with shouts of praise. “Had fleets conveyed to

us the diamonds of Golconda, and the most precious things of the East, we should still have been poor compared with what we have become, since the gospel has brought to our shores treasures of heavenly wisdom, the unsearchable riches of Christ." How grateful we ought to feel that the gospel in all the plenitude of its life-giving influences is still in our possession to enrich, and bless, and save our miserable world! Have we an interest in this gospel? Is it the gospel of my salvation? Reader, is it thine? O! *what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* The loss of the soul is irreparable, inconceivable, and eternal. To lose the soul is to be consigned from the presence of God's glory into the depths of eternal woe, where the wail rises,—time's gone, the righteous are saved, the wicked are damned, and Providence is approved. Future punishments are compared to the gnawings of a worm, and to the excruciating sufferings produced by fire. Is such the sign? What must the thing signified be? Is this the shadow, what must be the substance? Yet this will be for ever and ever. The place of future punishment is compared to a pit. As a minister was walking along one day in the neighbourhood of Durham, he met with a collier who was return-

ing from his work. On coming up to him, the minister observed, Have you heard of a pit without a bottom? No, said the man; where does it lay? there is not such a one in this neighbourhood. What, replied the minister, have you not heard of the pit of perdition? Yes, said the collier, I was not thinking of the bottomless pit. The persons who descend into the deepest pits on earth have ropes or chains to draw them out again; but those who go down into the bottomless pit will have no ropes or chains to pull them out. It is compared also to a lake. As a gentleman was standing at the head of one of the beautiful lakes of Cumberland, a man came up to him. The gentleman asked him how deep the lake was. He said, It is so very deep that I cannot tell you how deep it is. The gentleman observed that he knew of one which was deeper than it. What lake is that? asked the man. The gentleman replied, in a solemn tone of voice, that It was the lake of hell-fire. In the noble lake of Windermere, a man was drowned. The place where he sank was sixty yards deep, but by means of a drag his body was recovered. But, once sink into the lake of hell-fire, and what drag can reach you there? Alas! the smoke of your torments would ascend upwards for ever. Sinner, look down into the

depths of perdition, and think what it is to be banished from God, and heaven, and happiness, to endure the mockery of Omnipotence, the execration of fiends, and the woes and wailings of the lost. Look upwards towards heaven, and consider how delightful it must be to rove through balmy fields of bliss, to pluck of the fruit of the tree of life in the Paradise of God, to drink in full draughts of never failing happiness and bliss, and in robes of white to stand on a sea of glass, hymning the songs and hallelujahs of praise to the triune Jehovah for ever. And then look around you, and as you see the shafts of death flying thick and fast, piercing many to the centre throb of life, hasten to the cross of Christ, seek an interest in his death, cry for pardon and peace through his blood ; and should ten thousand times ten thousand worlds conspire to drive you thence, let your cry be,—A Saviour, or I perish ; a Redeemer, or I sink beneath the weight of my corruptions for ever.

“ Come, sinner, burdened with thy sin,
Come thy way to Zion’s gate ;
There, till mercy let thee in,
Knock, and weep, and watch, and wait.

Knock, he knows the sinner’s cry ;
Weep, he loves the sinner’s tears ;
Watch, for saving grace is nigh ;
Wait, till heavenly light appears.”

CHAPTER II.

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL, CONTINUED.

This is not only seen in its designation or appellation, but in its spirituality. It is spiritual in its author, Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, the source of all authoritative enactment and spiritual life. But who can describe the grace and glory of his person? What language shall we employ to set them forth?

All is too mean to speak the Saviour's worth,
Too mean to set the Saviour forth.

We no sooner begin to speak of it than we instantly feel the poverty of our thoughts, and our utter unfitness to approach it. It is a subject on which minds of every order are alike lost. It infinitely swallows up all thought and imagination.

"The spacious earth, and spreading flood,
Proclaim the wise and powerful God;
And his rich glories from afar,
Sparkle in every rolling star.

But in Christ's looks a glory stands,
The noblest labour of his hands;
The pleasing lustre of his eyes,
Outshines the wonders of the skies."

Look at his dignity. Co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, he claims the attributes, and performs the works of Deity. Dignity was his before the world was, he being one with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, to whom be glory for ever. With dignity he was invested whilst on earth. This was shewn in his looks when Simon Peter said, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man.* It was manifested in his words when the officers that were sent to take him returned, saying, *Never man spake like this man.* And it was demonstrated in his actions, in his healing the sick, restoring the blind to sight, causing the lame to walk, and scattering blessings innumerable on sinful, apostate men.

And dignity is his now, as the Prince of Peace. Jesus lives. "And," says a powerful writer, "there is no consideration that can be presented to the human mind, more heart-thrilling than this,—that he lives as *King of kings, and Lord of lords*,—that the sceptre of unlimited sovereignty is placed in his hands,—that he occupies the throne of universal government,—that the friend of sinners is Lord of the dead and the living, the Lord of glory, and the Lord of all,—and that he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet." *By him*

were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. He is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is the Head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead: that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

Consider his character. Every excellence centres in Him. Whilst on earth, his wisdom, power, goodness, truth, holiness, and love, beamed from his person, and were exhibited to the view of mankind, like the rays of the sun, when they are reflected with such brilliancy by the horizon, on a clear morning, as

“ Lord’s bright day ascends the hemisphere,”

and gilds the whole scene before us in creation with his golden tints, presenting to us visions of the loftiest grandeur and glory.

And glance at his benevolence. This is shewn in nature, revelation, providence, and grace. In nature, his goodness is every where manifest. When we take a survey of the earth, and gaze upon

“ ———— the mountains high,
The valleys that beneath them lie,
The stream that rolls in silver tide
Along the rugged mountain side,
The grassy mead, the lofty tree,”

we are filled with admiration at his goodness. But oh ! how our admiration is increased when we lift up our eyes to the heavens, and see

“ Him guide the comet in his race
On through immensity of space ;
The blazing meteor in its flight
Across the boundless field of night ;”

regulating the planets in their movements, causing the sun in its glory, and the moon in her mild majesty, to exert their beneficial influences on our world.

It is set before us in revelation. Man is a traveller. His life is a journey. Heaven is his end. His road lies through a wilderness. And he is in the dark. Thus circumstanced, how earnestly and devoutly ought he to pray,—
Send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy hill and tabernacles. Light and truth have been provided. *Thy word, says David, is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.* And O

“ How precious is the book divine,
By inspiration given,
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,
To guide our souls to heaven.

It sweetly cheers our drooping hearts,
In this dark vale of tears ;
Life, light, and joy it still imparts,
And quells our rising fears.

This lamp, through all the tedious night
Of life, shall guide our way,
Till we behold the clearer light
Of an eternal day.”

In providence, his goodness is displayed.
“ In the radiant heat and impervious darkness,
the clouds and the vapours, the sweetness of
the calm and the roar of the tempest, the light-
ning and the thunder, the smiling Spring, the
genial Summer, the golden Autumn, and the
stormy Winter, and in all the innumerable
creatures that have been endowed with animal
life and instinct,—are governed by his mandate,
and are dependent on his care.”

But it is the most strikingly exhibited in his
grace, when *he made his soul an offering for
sin, that we might be made the righteousness
of God in him.* Herein is love, sovereign love,
unbounded love, eternal love; *not that we loved
God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to
be a propitiation for our sins.*

“ Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands our souls, our lives, our all.”

It is spiritual in its subjects. These are believers in Christ Jesus. They are the subjects of his regenerating grace, and heirs of his everlasting kingdom. This vast and mighty change has been wrought in them by the agency of the Spirit of God. In Holy Writ it is set forth by various metaphors. It is spoken of under the term creation. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.* He has new views, feelings, desires, objects, pleasures, and pursuits.

It is set forth in the term resurrection. *And he hath raised you up, and made you to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,* says the apostle of the Gentiles, to the believing Ephesians. The voice that bid Lazarus *come forth*, had awoke them from death to life, and invested them with the privileges and blessings of the gospel. And it is from the same omnipotent energy that we must arise from our slumbers in the grave of sin, be brought to inhale the breath of life, and live.

It is set forth by the term new birth. *Of his own will begat he us, by the word of truth. They are begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* Be-

lievers in Christ Jesus, is it not so? Have you not experienced it? Yes. It is realised by all true believers in Christ Jesus. But where there is no faith in Christ, there is no spiritual life, no love to Jesus, no thirst after God, no fitting objects to regulate the affections, no hope of future glory. Until men receive Christ, they are *without hope, without Christ, and without God in the world*. The only way to them from this world is down to the chambers of death beneath. O! that the intelligence may fly like the electric fluid, when amid the darkness of the tempest it levels with the ground the loftiest piles of architectural grandeur and beauty, so may it smash into ten thousand atoms the false refuges where they hide themselves, drive them from their entrenchments against God, lead them to fly to the shelter of the cross, and to yield themselves to the revivifying, embalming, and mellowing influences of the gospel, that they may become partakers of God's grace, be formed for his praise, and admitted to live and reign with him for ever.

It is spiritual in its blessings. These are pardon, peace, purity, and happiness. Pardon is one of the blessings of the gospel. What does the man want that is condemned by the

laws of his country, and is under the sentence of death? Were you to pour the wealth of Peru at his feet, or to confer upon him the friendship of all the nobles and grandees of this world, these things would be of no moment to him. The burden of his cry would be, pardon, give me a pardon, a pardon is all I want. The sinner is condemned by God, and under the sentence of everlasting death; but the gospel with its inviting voice draws near and proclaims pardon, in the name, by the authority, and through the blood of Christ. Hark! the glorious news is now breaking the gloom of his cell. At its sound the prison doors fly open, and the prisoner bounds into the enjoyment of light, life, liberty, happiness, blessedness, and peace.

Peace is another blessing of the gospel. A man may receive a pardon from an earthly sovereign, and yet be a traitor in his heart. But when the gospel brings pardon to the sinner, it subjugates his heart to God, stills the rising enmity of his mind, and causes it to throb in unison with the mind and will of God. The clamours of a guilty conscience subside. The favour of God is bestowed. And joy and gladness rest on the soul.

“ The wound is stanch’d, the foe subdued,
And peace triumphs in the soul renewed.”

This peace is the result of faith in Christ. It is produced by the blood shed upon the cross.

“ Hail ! heavenly peace of mind !
Thy dwelling place serene,
No mortal e’er can find
In all this earthly scene.
I sought in vain the gift divine,
Till faith in Jesus made it mine.”

Purity is another blessing of the gospel. It changes the views of men in regard to sin. It destroys in them all love to it, and it brings them to seek a complete conformity in their affections and actions to the revealed will of God. This blessing is inseparably connected with justification. *Those whom God justifies, he sanctifies.* Justification is something done without us. Sanctification is something done within us. Justification is an instantaneous work. Sanctification is progressive. The one is complete when a man is converted to God ; the other when his soul obtains an entrance into heaven. The converted man, therefore, is like the morning sun, which ascends in its course, and grows brighter and brighter until it attains to the full splendour of meridian day ; or like

the morning star, which at the approach of day loses itself in the effulgent beams of the rising sun. But the wicked man is like the sun descending until it sets in the pitchy darkness of night.

Happiness is another blessing of the gospel. Real happiness consists in a consciousness of the divine favour and love,—the peace that passeth all understanding, which is the sunshine of the breast,—and a sweet hope of glory rising in the soul. This happiness is experienced by all true believers. It is secured by faith in Christ. It springs from the cross.

“ Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend,
Life, and health, and peace possessing,
From the sinner’s dying Friend.”

All men need it. Multitudes are in the pursuit of it. But alas ! too many are seeking it where it can never be found. They are searching for it in the giddy rounds of pleasure, whereas it can only be obtained through the redemption that is in Christ. And as well may men seek for grapes beneath the icy poles, blooming roses on the cheek of death, and substance from a world of fleeting shades, as seek happiness apart from that

“ ——— soul-exalting plan
Which Christ laid down, to bless and govern man.”

Eternal life is another blessing of the gospel. This is not merely the soul's immortality. It would not be a blessing eternally to exist in this life, or in hell. The term eternal life, therefore, comprehends heaven with all its glories, raptures, ecstasies, and bliss. It consists in the full enjoyment of the divine presence. The symbol of God's presence amongst his ancient people, the Jews, was the cloud of glory which rested on the tabernacle, and covered the mercy seat. God manifests himself to believers, who are his spiritual Israel at the present day, by his Spirit. This, however, is only in part. In heaven it is full—perfect—complete. There are no hidings of God's face, no concealments of his presence, no tokens of his displeasure amongst the bright squadrons of the heavenly host. Happy spirits there for ever bask in the sunshine of the divine countenance, and never mourn his absence. This constitutes their felicity and bliss. It is the source of happiness to a good man on earth; and if it should be so exhilarating in this vale of tears and woes, O ! how blissful and ecstatic it must be to dwell for ever in the presence of God. Let us covet it, that being refreshed with its delights, we may seek after its full enjoyment,

“ Where we shall see his face,
And never, never sin ;
And from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in.”

It consists in a perfect assimilation to the image of God. The image of the heavenly is possessed by all the people of God, on earth. This, however, is only to a limited extent. There is no such thing as absolute perfection below the skies. If there be any that affirm it, let them place themselves in the light of the divine holiness, and look at their dispositions, characters, and performances,—their thoughts, words, and deeds ; and then if they have no film resting on their eyes, with what horror and indignation will they start back at the sight of their corruption and deformity ; and with what bitter invective will they exclaim with Job, *Behold I am vile, wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes.*

In heaven the people of God bear a full and glorious resemblance to the divine image. They have *neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. They are unreprouceable and unrebukeable in the sight of God.* Every lineament and feature of their souls is adorned with the spotless beauties of the Saviour's likeness ; and in cloudless and insufferable splendour and glory, they shine before God's sapphire throne.

Behold ! what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, in that we should be called the sons of God ; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

“ O ! glorious hour ! O ! bless'd abode !
I shall be near and like my God :
And flesh and sense no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul.”

Are we the people of God ? *It is by the sanctification of the Spirit in the belief of the truth.* Have we a name amongst the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty ? And are we seeking a better country, even a heavenly one ? Let us seek the evidence of it in our dispositions, tempers, characters, conduct, and lives. And that we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—close the mouths of gainsayers—and shew that we have been with Jesus, let us constantly seek to become more sweet in our dispositions, more lovely in our tempers, more upright in our characters, and unblameable in our lives, until we are meetened for the society of the blest, are borne on angels' wings to glory, and attain to consummate happiness of body and spirit for ever.

It consists in the possession and enjoyment of unutterable happiness and bliss. The people of God, on earth, drink from the stream, rest under the shadow of God's ordinance, and partake of its fruits. And if the streams be so sweet, what must the fountain be? If the shadow be so refreshing, what must the substance, the good things themselves be? If the earnest be so enriching, what must the inheritance itself be—an inheritance defined to be *incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*. *In thy presence*, said David, *is fulness of joy*—a fulness like the river that overflows its banks—a fulness which resembles the ocean in all the illimitability of its range, and in all the depths of its profound abyss—a fulness which will roll onwards in its course for ever. *At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*. The enjoyments of the people of God will be blissful as eternity, glorious as eternity, and endless as eternity.

This bliss is certain. God has provided it,—he has given believers a title to it, through the righteousness of his Son,—and ratified it in the promise which he has made to them of everlasting life. Many seek it in the creature. To such, however, let the touching appeal made to universal nature, by Lady Flora Hastings, thrill

through every thought and sensibility of their natures, where she says,

“ Tell me, ye winged winds,
That round my pathway roar,
Do ye not know some spot
Where mortals weep no more ?
Some lone and pleasant dell—
Some valley in the west,
Where free from toil and pain,
The weary soul may rest ?
The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low,
Sighing for pity, as it answered—No !

Tell me, thou mighty deep,
Whose billows round me play,
Know'st thou some favour'd spot,
Some island far away,
Where weary man may find
The bliss for which he sighs ;
Where sorrow never lives,
And friendship never dies ?
The wild waves rolling in perpetual flow,
Stopp'd for awhile, and sighed to answer—No !

And thou, serenest moon,
That with such holy face,
Dost look upon the earth,
Asleep in night's embrace,
Tell me, in all thy round,
Hast thou not seen some spot
Where miserable man
Might find a happier lot ?
Behind a cloud the moon withdrew in woe,
And a voice, sweet, but sad, responded—No !

Tell me, my secret soul,
 O tell me, hope and faith,
 Is there no resting place
 From sorrow, sin, and death?
 Is there no happy spot
 Where mortals may be bless'd,
 Where grief may find a balm,
 And weariness a rest?

Faith, hope, and love,—best boons to mortals given,
 Waved their bright wings, and whisper'd—
 Yes, in Heaven!"

Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. It is near. If we have a cross, we have not to carry it far. If our trials be heavy, they will soon be over. A few more rolling suns, and a few more fleeting days, and then all that is painful will be over, and all that is blissful and ecstatic will be ours.

"A few short years of trial past,
 We reach that happy shore,
 Where death-divided friends shall meet
 At last, to part no more."

It will be blissful and glorious. Rough may be the passage, but sweet will be the haven. If it is heaven on earth to grasp with the hand of affection and friendship friends near and dear, after a season of absence, what must it be to dwell in that eternal home beyond the skies—

that eternal building of God in the heavens —
that house not made with hands ?

“ There our best friends and kindred dwell ;
There God, our Saviour, reigns.”

What Canaan was to the Jews, heaven will be
infinitely beyond to the believer in Christ Jesus.

“ Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand drest in living green.”

But who can describe to us the fulness of its bliss ? It is impossible for fancy to depict, or imagination to pourtray it. The eye has not gazed upon such scenes of grandeur, as those which burst upon the vision of glorified spirits. Ear has not heard the sounds of more than mortal sweetness, which float through those regions of blessedness and repose. Neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive in all its fullest extent what God has prepared for them that love him. O ! how diligently ought we to long for the fulness of its happiness and bliss.

“ Fly swiftly round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome day.”

The gospel is spiritual in its privileges. It secures to men communion with God. And oh ! what a privilege is this. Man is a dependent

creature. To whom can he go but to God? How consoling to think that His bosom teems with compassion, and overflows with pity and love. To Him let us cling, and before Him let us spread our joys, our sorrows, and our tears.

“ A Deity believ'd is joy begun ;
A Deity ador'd is joy advanc'd ;
A Deity belov'd is joy matur'd :
Each branch of piety delight inspires.
Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
O'er death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides.
Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still.
Prayer, ardent, opens heaven—lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man in audience with the Deity :
Who worships the great God, that instant joins
The first in heaven, and sets his foot on hell.”

It introduces men to the fellowship of God's family. Man is a social creature. He is ranged under one of two leaders, and his influence is exerted for good or for evil. It is mighty for weal or for woe. When he becomes a converted character, he is expected to exert his influence for good—good only—good continually. Amid the degeneracy and corruption of the human race, however, mutual reproof, exhortation, and assistance are necessary. Reproof is sometimes needed. When given, the gentlest manner

and the softest feeling of address ought to be adopted. Our words must not fall like a violent storm, causing that to droop which it was meant to cherish. They must descend like the dew on the tender herb, or like melting flakes of snow. The softer they fall, the longer they will dwell on the mind, and the deeper they will sink into the heart. *If any man is overtaken in a fault, let him that is spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.*

Exhortation is always required. The best of men are but men. The most active are not yet half awake. And men are mortal. *Let us consider one another, therefore, says the apostle of the Gentiles, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.* Exhort one another. But what are we to exhort them to? We may exhort them to consider the value of a soul. But how shall we set it forth? What shall we compare to it? To attempt a comparison is inconceivably vain, seeing that in importance, or worth, it transcends every thing earthly; as eternity, an interminable duration

of time, transcends a moment—as the ocean transcends a drop of water—as the blazing sun in its noontide splendour transcends the dim twinkling star—as the heavens, with all their sublimity and grandeur, transcend the earth—as the universe transcends an atom—and as God transcends man.

We may exhort one another to think of its depravity. When we speak of the depravity of the soul, we regard it as including its pollution, debasement, misery, and ruin. This is the effect of Adam's transgression. *By one man's disobedience many were made sinners*, and we amongst the rest. And not more frequently do the mountains of Sicily throw up their balls of fire and send their effluvia to the skies, than the heart of man in its unsanctified state belches its oaths and blasphemies against God. *Out of the heart of man*, said our Saviour, *proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness*. And when the power of sin is destroyed, there are still the remains of sin, which like a dead body, believers carry about with them; under which they groan, being burdened; and oppressed with which, they are frequently heard to

exclaim, O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from these vile bodies of sin and death ?

We may exhort one another to form an estimate of its danger, from a proneness to start aside from the path of rectitude and safety—from the artful insinuations, alluring temptations, and the desperate assaults of Satan, the great adversary of souls, who is constantly prowling about like the wolf around the fold, seeking whom he may devour—and, also, from the wrath and vengeance of God, denounced against all who transgress his holy and righteous laws.

We may exhort one another to realise a sense of our duty to God and man. To God.—There are duties which we owe to God. We are to pray to, please, serve, love, honour, and obey Him. And to man.—There are duties which we owe to each other in the relationship that we sustain to our families and friends, neighbourhood and country, the church and the world—as men, citizens, parents, and Christians.

We may exhort one another to look at its destiny. The heart of man has sighed many times in passing through life; but there is a time when it will sigh its last. The eye of man has shed many tears; but there is a period when

the last tear will be shed to moisten the cheek. The sun has gone its rounds for six thousand years; yet there is a day when it will set to rise no more: but the soul can never be extinguished. Its existence will never terminate. It will survive the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds, and live for ever in raptures or in woes, amid the splendours of heaven, or in the torments of hell.

That the dying embers of our zeal may be stirred up, and lighted into a flame, let us seek *to provoke each other*, not to envy and strife, but to *love and good works*, and so much the more as, saith the apostle, *we see the day approaching*, when we must bid adieu to earth, and enter the invisible world, stand before the tribunal of heaven, and hear the voice of the great Judge, saying, *Come ye blessed*, or, *Depart ye cursed*.

And all need assistance in the ranks of the faithful. This cannot be dispensed with. We are mutually dependent on each other, so that *the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you*. We need all the helps that we can get in our way to the kingdom. And happy they, who, by the assistance given, are stimulated to maintain the fight, to pursue

their work, until they close their eyes and ears to the perceptions of mortality, their spirits spring to immortality, and with the myriads of the blest, cast their crowns at the feet of the Lamb, singing, *Thou alone art worthy, and unto thee be all the praise.*

It produces the testimony of a smiling and approving conscience. "This is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. It accompanies a person through the flowery mead and the thorny mazes of life. It converts the gloom of midnight into the light of cheerful day, and gives additional lustre to the brightness of meridian noon. In the hurry and confusion of society it tranquillizes the agitated mind, and in the calmness of solitude it soothes the troubled soul. Under the gleams of prosperity it enlarges our enjoyments, and amid the darkness of adversity it tempers and brightens the scene. It converts the present wilderness with all its woes into a blooming paradise of bliss. It gives satisfaction and delight to every reflection. It supports and consoles in the dying hour. It dispels the horrors of the gloomy vale. It exalts the pleasures of anticipation, and it ushers the enraptured soul into the untroubled peace and unclouded splendour of the heavenly

glory." The testimony of a good conscience arises from a joyful assurance of an interest in Christ, and a strong confidence in the power, faithfulness, and grace of God.

It ensures to us the protection of God. God has made a special provision for his people, and the gospel points it out to them. He has made exceeding great and precious promises to them, suited to their every emergency and need, and the gospel sets them forth for their encouragement, comfort, and hope, and reminds them that they are all *yea and amen in Christ Jesus, to the glory of God*. He has also given us bright examples of those who have experienced his gracious sympathy, compassion, and love, and the gospel holds them up to our view to banish despondency, and inspire hope, to enable us to triumph in God, and to rejoice in him for evermore. *Blessed are they that put their trust in him. They shall never be ashamed or confounded, world without end.*

It enables us to triumph in the hour of death. The Jews, on entering the promised land, had to cross the swellings of Jordan. So has the Christian, on entering heaven. At certain seasons of the year, Jordan overflowed its banks. So the billows of death frequently rise, and

many fear to pass. There is the shrinking of nature, and this is natural; but when they ford its depths encompassed by the arms of infinite mercy and love, their fears subside, their joys arise, and with glory beaming in their eyes, and heavenly music swelling in their souls, they welcome death, and some celestial band, to bear their souls away to Canaan's fair and blissful coast.

It introduces us to consummate happiness of body and spirit for ever. Dark and silent as may be the tomb, and long the abode of the body there, the morning of the resurrection will break on the regions of decay, and with its light penetrate the caverns of the grave. Then the dead in Christ, waked by the loud peal of the archangel's trumpet,

“Will burst their chains with sweet surprise,
And in their Saviour's image rise.”

Clad in celestial brightness they will come forth from their hiding places, and in one vast, prodigious multitude, be welcomed to the right hand of the Saviour, to live and reign with him in the regions of everlasting purity and bliss, where they will for ever dwell, and

“——— with snowy robes,
And branchy palms, surround the fount of life,
And drink the streams of immortality,
For ever happy, and for ever young.”

It is spiritual in its principles. These principles consist in the love and fear of God. "The mind," says Dr. Andrew Reed, "requires principles on which to act—principles to imbue it, and to guide it—principles to enlighten, purify, and elevate it—principles to connect it with God, and happiness, and heaven." What can supply these principles? Infidelity, Papacy, Puseyism? No! No! No! The gospel alone reveals them, and it only can impart them. In the gospel they are set forth in all their excellency and glory, enjoining supreme love to God, and universal love to man.

In themselves these principles are powerful. They have caused multitudes to renounce the world, with its sinful pleasures—to yield sincere, constant, and universal obedience to Christ,—and to make sacrifices to promote his cause. "Civil rulers may know but little of this," says the high-souled editor of the *Christian Examiner*. "Their minds have been so accustomed to think of places and pensions, monopolies and endowments, that they can hardly think of casting the advantages of these to the winds for conscience sake; but what do the records chronicled in the annals of nations, say? They tell us that the principles of the gospel are the

mightiest of all powers—that they have within themselves the elements of immortality—that it is impossible to crush them—and that if we bury them beneath the weight of principalities and powers, it will upheave them all.” They have been proscribed, resisted, and held in bondage for ages, by the lust of power natural to man ; but from their long confinement have they burst, and appeared before an astonished world in all their majesty. Again have they been proscribed—hurled into abeyance—driven into exile. Like the fabled Phoenix, however, they are now rising from the flames in renovated vigour—going forth to achieve the most brilliant victories, to irradiate the Christian world with their triumphs, and to fill it with men whose spirits are too mighty to be bound.

Look at their influence. How cheering to behold them preparing men for high and holy enterprises,—inspiring them with a benevolence like that which brought the Son of God from heaven, and disposed him to bleed and die for a lost world,—arming them with a fortitude which defies all dangers, and surmounts all difficulties which obstruct their progress,—animating them with an ardent zeal for the promotion of God’s glory, and the extension of his

spiritual kingdom, which no powers of persecution could subdue,—and leading them to give themselves in an entire consecration of heart to God, and of life to his glory. This has been manifest in every age, and is now vividly set forth in every part of our world where the gospel has been made known, and witnesses have been raised up to its transforming power and influence.

How cheering to behold these principles in their prospects. If they are only yielding the first-fruits in scanty handfuls—a single ripe stalk plucked here and there from the dense field ; yet this should lead us to thank God, and take courage. It proves that the divine Spirit is at work, without whose agency nothing good can be done ; and only let the principles of the gospel be spread more widely, and under his blessing, stupendous will be the results. In proportion as these principles have been disseminated, and taken root, in proportion, under the divine countenance and benediction, they have been instrumental in greatly extending the Saviour's kingdom amongst men. In proportion as they are now disseminated, will the first-fruits of the people of God be greatly increased—the church put on her beautiful gar-

ments—and the chariot of the everlasting gospel roll forth into all lands unencumbered with the drag of state alliance. “The church will then no longer lean for support on the crutches of government patronage; but strong in the affections of her children, and supported by the voluntary contributions of the people of God, will appear clothed in the glory of her primitive might, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”

How cheering to see the effects arising from the spread of Christian principles. “It is cheering to see the effects produced by the returning Spring, in the lengthening days, the brightening sun, the early flowers, the opening leaves, the crops, the garden, and the field,—so it is cheering to see the influence of Christian principles, like the returning Spring, producing signs of life, and covering by their vernal influences previous desolation with the buds and bloom of returning life, that blossom and bear fruits of righteousness,” which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God.

These principles have been every where tested. Myriads have been renovated, blest, and made happy by them in Christendom. These are the germinant principles from which

have “arisen the flourishing and fruitful plants, which have been since propagated, and are now adorning with their rich luxuriance so many of the groups and islands of the Southern Pacific.” They are the principles which raise the heathen every where from degradation to comfort—from the “rudeness and vile indulgence of savage life, to the manifold enjoyments of civilized life—from Pagan darkness to evangelical light”—from sin to holiness, and from Satan to God.

How delightful to think that they possess the means of their own support and extension. They thrive best when left to themselves. When propped up by the golden buttress of the State, or fenced round by a provision made out of its funds, they wear a sickly and deformed aspect; but when left to seek their nourishment in their own resources, they spread their roots, and laugh to scorn the hurricane and the storm.”

How delightful to think that they will be preserved. Whatever event may happen, we cannot unite with the cry that “the church of Christ is in danger. He who stilled the waves of Galilee will preserve it. The Lord God will be as a fire around Zion, and the glory in the midst thereof; and if the period be at no great distance, as the signs of the times seem to inti-

mate, when every section of the church shall be left to support the men who minister in their sanctuaries, from their free-will offerings, who knows but what this may be the time, when the mountain of the Lord shall be exalted on the tops of the mountains, and all people shall flow unto it. Then mount Zion shall become the joy of the whole earth, and the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

It is spiritual in its laws. These are to love and serve, honour and obey God. They are every where set forth in his holy word. They are addressed to the understanding, conscience, and heart, and enforced by the sweet and resistless influence of redeeming love.

It is spiritual in its aim and end. This is the glory of God in the salvation of men. It is the orb around which our thoughts and feelings ought ever to revolve, like the planets which are constantly wheeling around the sun. *Whether ye eat or drink, said the apostle Paul, do all to the glory of God.*

CHAPTER III.

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL, CONTINUED.

THE gospel is powerful, as well as spiritual in its nature. Great is the power that exists in matter; greater is the power that there is in mind; but the greatest power is in the gospel. The gospel spiritualises men; it frees the captive, acquits the condemned, sanctifies the polluted, gives hope to the desponding, riches to the impoverished, strength to the weak, health to the sick, and life to the dead: it gathers "grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles; it turns the wrath of man into a song worthy the harps of heaven; it takes the most untractable and unapproachable human passions, and yokes them to the car of duty, and henceforth they run in the way of obedience, proud to grace its triumphs;" it expels from the heart the "venom of the old serpent; it purges the conscience from the invisible stains of guilt; it releases the passions from the bondage of corruption; and it invites them to soar aloft into the regions of uncreated light and beauty." From the elements of vice and wretchedness it forms new creatures, and causes them to start

forth in all the energy of health and life, to the praise and glory of God. It opens to them sources of enjoyment, and imparts to them light, life, liberty, and blessedness. It builds a bridge over the gulf of death, gives men a passport to heaven, and introduces them to the enjoyment of unbounded felicity and bliss.

It civilizes men. The gospel is the machinery of civilization. It is its invariable result. Wherever the gospel has gone, in its paths civilization and the arts of peace have followed, taken deep root, and grown up, and have borne fruit that has gladdened the heart of philanthropy. This is shewn in the spread of the gospel at Rome, during the primitive ages of Christianity, where it cleansed her amphitheatre of human blood.

It is strikingly made manifest in our own country. To it we are indebted for our trade and commerce—civil and religious liberty—the blessings of peace—the cultivation of the arts and sciences—for our love of literature—and every thing that can enlarge, elevate, purify, adorn, and bless the mind of man. When the Romans first invaded our country we were sunk in the depths of barbarism and cruelty. Our ancestors were the votaries of superstition and crime. Around them the dark and lofty moun-

tains of ignorance reared their heads, and the murky clouds of superstition and error every where spread themselves, like a funeral pall, covered with the blackness of darkness. The sun of truth, however, has risen, and is now bursting over the mountains of ignorance and prejudice, which have existed for ages, whilst the murky clouds of superstition and error are every where dispersing. By the introduction of the gospel into this country, we have been impelled in the path of knowledge, mercy, and improvement, brought to take our rank amongst the nations of the earth, and to sustain a proud pre-eminence among those nations. And what are her bulwarks? Do you point to her army, navy, &c.? These are not her glory. If she has any thing in which to boast, it is in her humane, literary, benevolent, and religious societies, which follow in the train of the gospel. It is in the truth of God, which we possess in all its fulness of power to enlighten, save, and bless—that are to be found the grand principles of the Reformation, the only source of true prosperity to individuals or nations, and the only means of their security or defence. With feelings of deep humility and adoring gratitude, therefore, let us ever look beyond the excellency of our Constitution—the wisdom of our states-

men—the wealth of our nobles—the valour of our armies—and the prowess of our navy—to Him who has made us the depository of his saving truth, and selected us to be his chosen instruments in making it known to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

In India, Africa, and in the Islands of the Pacific Ocean, it has also performed miracles of mercy, and achieved the most brilliant victories,—victories which cause the deeds of all the moralists, philosophers, and philanthropists, that have ever lived, to dwindle into perfect insignificance,—victories which imprint the characters of missionaries in letters of fire, which will outlast the earth, and outshine the sky, and set them forth in clouds of light to the view of angels and men,—victories which will be chronicled in the rolls of eternity, and swell the tide of living joy that circulates around the throne of God, and increase the loud burst of praise that is ever rising from the assembled myriads in the presence of Deity.

“These victories,” says the author of Jethro, “consist in the extinction of war with its calamities, the establishment of peace with its blessings, the annihilation of every thing that is hurtful to man, and the introduction of every thing that can contribute to his happiness,—

liberty, literature, arts, science, commerce, just legislation, and international honour." Had philosophy wrought such wonders? Could it boast of such splendid triumphs? It would have been sounded by the trumpet of fame throughout the world, and have conferred the world's honours on its leaders and patrons. "It would have been an event," says Dr. Chalmers, "blown by the trumpet of fame, of which we should have never heard the last."

The gospel humanizes men. In ancient legend we are informed that Orpheus, by the charms of music, drew the savages from the woods, and brought them around him, bending at his feet. But what does the gospel do? It brings before us the scene of which this fable is a fictitious representation, in all its reality. It erects the cross of Christ in the midst of the human family, and unites men to Christ as their legal and vital Head, and to each other in him, —whatever their language, colour, or costume, —and forms them into one holy and benignant brotherhood. It secures to them equal rights and privileges in Christ. It implants in them an instinctive love of virtue, holiness, and peace. It melts down the selfishness of the human heart. It expands the mind, and causes it to glow with love to God and man. It teaches

men to *do justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.*

Impressed with the infinite efficacy and power of the gospel, Lactantius said, "Give me a man who is passionate, abusive in his language, headstrong and ungovernable, and with a very few of the words of God, I will render him gentle as a lamb. Give me a greedy, unfeeling, and hard-hearted miser, and I will presently return him to you, filled with generosity, and bestowing his money by handfuls. Give me a man with a cruel and sanguinary spirit, and straightway his ferocity shall give way to tenderness. Give me a cheat, a fool, and a malefactor, and he shall become just, wise, and virtuous." How wonderful the power of the gospel! By its application to the mind, in the demonstration and power of the Spirit, it makes "heathen men Christian men, and savages brethren in Christ," and elevates all to whom it comes, to the dignity of sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. But take away this power out of the gospel, and you take away all that is life-giving and saving to man. It is like taking away the upper part of the air that we breathe, the oxygen of our atmosphere. When that is gone, all nature immediately becomes one unvaried scene of barrenness, desolation,

and death. Not a plant lives. Not an animal breathes. Not a fire burns. Even so if we take grace out of the gospel, every thing is removed that is vital and saving. There is nothing left but the body without the soul—the cup without the wine—the purse without the money—the casket without the jewel. It then ceases to be gospel, or good news. But with the grace which it possesses, and sets forth, and presses on our attention, it is every thing that God designed it to be, or that man can desire. *It is the power of God unto salvation.* O! to feel it to be so, and to give evidence of it in a holy life, must yield the richest consolation to the mind. There are many things which men require in life. But there is one thing above all others. It is an interest in the gospel. Had they the richest of earthly blessings at command, and yet lived destitute of a saving faith in Christ, and a devout and heavenly mind, they would be *poor, and miserable, and wretched.*

“ Were I possessor of the earth,
And called the stars my own :
Without Christ’s graces and himself,
I was a wretch undone.”

But receiving Christ by faith, men become rich beyond description and conception, even though they have not a foot of land to call their own, or any of the comforts of this world.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE GOSPEL.

IN the Mirror of the Gospel, we see its Divine origin. It every where bears marks of its original, sets forth its credentials, and points out to us the source from whence it came.

Its origin is seen in its design. This is—the highest glory of God in the highest happiness of men. Man has departed from his original rectitude, and gone away from God, the fountain of all happiness and bliss. God, in the exercise of his justice, has smitten him with his curse, and rendered him liable to everlasting misery and woe. To rescue him from guilt and danger, and to recover him to holiness and happiness, God gave the dearest object of his love, as a sacrifice for sin. And such was the dignity of the Saviour's person, the perfection of his obedience, and the power of his grace, that men every where can now be made happy, and God receive the glory. The triumphs of God's justice in the death of Christ, have introduced the reign of mercy, and God now proclaims himself to be full of mercy,

goodness, and truth. By the outstretched arms of his grace, multitudes have been saved, and heaven and earth resound with the songs of fervid gratitude and elevated praise to God. And are his arms shortened, that they cannot reach us? No. The arms that compassed them, can compass us, and all mankind.

“ O goodness infinite, goodness immense,
And love that passeth knowledge !
Language is lost in wonders so divine.
Come, thou expressive silence, muse His praise !”

Its origin is discovered in its arrangement or plan. It throws light on the divine character, and causes the orb of his perfections to shine in all its magnificence, splendour, and glory. It sets forth the spirituality and extent of the divine law, which enjoins supreme love to God, and universal love to man, and denounces vengeance on all who fail to meet its requirements in word, thought, and deed. It lays open the way of access to God, by Jesus Christ,—a way honourable to God, and safe for man,—a way which sheds an incommunicable lustre on all the perfections of God,—a way in which our fathers have trod,—in which myriads have come to God,—and in which we are invited to draw near to Him. It discloses to us the rich, varied,

and abundant blessings of the gospel under the phraseology of a feast or supper. It brings before us the kind, pressing, and urgent invitations of the Lord of the feast, to participate in its blessings. It plies our minds with the most cogent motives to seek the attainment of such abundant good. And lest we should fail to obtain an interest in its blessings, it secures to us the aid of the Spirit, to give us an appetite, and to impart to us a relish for the provisions of the gospel, that we may eat and drink abundantly.

The gospel is perfect in all its parts ; giving to us disclosures which have been *hid from ages and generations, but now are made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.* The message, therefore, that the gospel brings, let us receive with all thankfulness. God's favour seek with the most earnest solicitude ; and in the transport of exaltation and joy let us swell the anthem of

praise to God, for his unspeakable gift ! Glory be to the Father who gave his Son for us ; glory be to the Son who gave himself ; and glory be to the Holy Ghost who unveils our depravity and guilt, exhibits the streaming glory of the cross, and appropriates the blessings of the redemption that is in Christ !

The origin of the Gospel is shewn in the miracles of Christ. A miracle is the work of a divine power. In the gospel we have brought before us an incontestible train of miracles. It tells us that he turned water into wine, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead to life, fed multitudes with a few loaves and fishes, and hushed the stormy elements into a calm. These miracles were wrought in the presence of his bitterest enemies, as well as his warmest friends ; and their number, power, and character, show the divinity of their origin, are evidences of his claim on the attention of men, and give weight to his instructions as the great Teacher of mankind. They prove to us that he was *God over all, blessed for ever*, and that the gospel which he came to make known has its origin in divine love. And they make valid the doctrines which he taught. The news flew with amazing rapidity over the hills of Judea, and

through its verdant dales. His fame was every where spread abroad, and his wonderful acts were registered in the hearts of myriads, and embalmed in their memories.

The origin of the gospel is made manifest in its authority. In the works of men, even of the best amongst men, there are imperfections and defects which detract from their excellence, mar them in their beauty, and limit their usefulness. This is evident in their sentiments, style, and expression: but where their sentiments are so pure, and their style so clear and perspicuous, and their language so bold and commanding, as to be unobjectionable, and to win unbounded admiration and applause, there still remains, says Robert Hall, an incurable defect, in that want of authority which robs them of their power over the conscience. They are obligatory no further than their reason is perceived. A deduction of proof is necessary, more or less intricate and uncertain; and even when clearest, it is but the language of man speaking to man. It is not so, however, in the gospel; it speaks to us with a dignity and majesty peculiar to itself, and with a demonstration and power of the Spirit. Its language is—*thus saith the Lord*, making it criminal in the highest degree to disobey.

The origin of the gospel is evidenced in its efficacy. It every where lays open the secrets of the human heart; it is a perfect key to it; it is a glass in which it is exhibited in all the workings of its depravity and guilt. This accounts for the statements of the heathen, that the God who made the gospel made their hearts. It brings before them the greatness of divine love, which melts them down by its power and tenderness, and turns the raven into a dove, the lion into a lamb. It produces an entire change in men, in their tempers, dispositions, characters, conduct, and lives. It metamorphoses the whole man. It constitutes men new creatures in Christ, instinct with life, immortality, and God. It makes men monuments of divine grace, to reflect the lovely image of the Saviour, to the joy and admiration of angels and men.

Its origin is demonstrated, also, in its purity. O! search into its contents. Look at its doctrines, precepts, promises, and instructions. View it in all its parts, and see if it is not worthy of that great and holy Being from whom it has come. Yes, it bears the impress of Deity. It is a transcript of the divine mind. It is the brightest reflection of his own glory. To distinguish it, therefore, from the writings of all the

sages of antiquity, and of modern philosophers, it is emphatically called the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God. It stands out pre-eminently the sun of the moral system, and as the great luminary of day is the central source of light and life in the animal world, so is the gospel in the spiritual world. No rays can pierce its impervious darkness, or chase away the gloom of fiendish night with which it is impanelled, but those which emanate from it. No life can be infused into the souls of men but that which the gospel brings. Had we, therefore, no gospel, the world of men around us would be like the world of matter where there were no rays of light to irradiate the cheerless void, or to impart to it energy and life. All would be darkness, desolation and death. God, however, in his great mercy has given us the gospel, to illumine the souls of men, and to enliven them with its rays, to light up to them the sorrowful vale of earth, to gild to them with glory the valley of the shadow of death, and to throw its radiances into the immensities of eternity. Shine forth, thou sun of our moral system! Every where disperse the mists and vapours of superstition and error, which attempt to shut out and conceal thy

glories from the world of men ; and from thy central source of light and life send forth thy rays to pierce the darkness that is hidden in the minds of men,—to fill their understandings with light, and their hearts with love,—to prepare them for honourable and useful life on earth, and for a loftier range of existence ; where with the redeemed, gathered from under every clime, and from amongst every tribe, they will shine bright in robes of purity and bliss, be loud in their thanksgivings and praises unto God, rise high in the scale of infinite perfection, and be wedded to happiness, and God, and each other, for ever.

CHAPTER V.

THE ADAPTATION OF THE GOSPEL.

Is light suited to the eye, and friendship to the heart ? Is the mountain track, breeze, or stream, fitted to invigorate the frame of nature ? Even so does the gospel of Jesus Christ meet the moral necessities of men. It is precisely adapted to their state, whatever their sex, class, or age ; colour or clime ; rank or station. Look at it : it every where meets the wants of men.

It is that alone which can make men happy, and promote their interests for both worlds. To illustrate this, let us look at man in the various aspects in which he is found.

Man is an ignorant creature. What is good news to a man who has lost his path, and who is enshrouded with darkness? Were you to point out to him the way in which he was to go, he would say, I cannot see. But were you to tell him that you had brought him a light, *that* would meet his case. In a spiritual point of view, man has gone out of his path, and become bewildered and lost; a bright light, however, has arisen on those that sit in the *regions of darkness, and in the shadow of death*, to guide them into the way of truth, holiness, and peace. Its light it brings and hurls into the depths of the mind of corruption, to reveal to men their sinfulness and wickedness, guilt and danger, remedy and obligations, duty and destiny. O! how adapted to their state.

Man is a famishing creature. What does he require in this case? What did the Israelites want in the wilderness, when they were about to sink into the jaws of famine and death? They wanted bread. God might have given them gold and silver from heaven. But had he

given them mountains of them, they would not have been suited to their state. Beholding them, therefore, in their helpless condition, and anticipating their wants, in his boundless mercy and love he rained down upon them manna from heaven. By feeding upon the husks of this world, man has brought himself into the jaws of spiritual famine and death. But God in his inimitable compassion and grace, has opened the windows of heaven a second time, and given him the bread of life, inviting him to eat of it, and live for ever. *I am, saith Christ, the bread of life, that cometh down from heaven ; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* O ! what good news. What glad tidings !

Man is a guilty creature. What does the criminal need ? Were you to enter his cell, and tell him that a large estate had been bequeathed to him, he would say, I cannot claim it, I cannot inherit it, I cannot enjoy it. But were you to tell him that you had brought him a pardon, a thrill of ecstasy would run through his heart ; his spirit would bound for joy. Man is an offender against God. He has broken his laws, and brought down upon him God's curse. The gospel, however, brings pardon to the

guilty. It proclaims *liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison-house to them that are bound. To the prisoners it says, Go forth; and to those that are in darkness, Shew yourselves.* O! what transports of joy it ought to produce in the souls of men; and what feelings of unbounded rapture it ought to awaken in their minds.

Man is a diseased creature, and wants health. Were you to enter the cell of the condemned criminal, and to find him not only bound in fetters and chains, but sick and ready to die, and were you to tell him that you had brought him a pardon, he would exclaim, You are too late; you should have come sooner. Here am I at the point of death: of what advantage will liberty be to me? But were you to tell him that you had a medicine with you which could cure him, he would say, That meets my wants; that is gospel.

Man is depraved as well as guilty.

“ Sin like a venomous disease,
Infects our vital blood.
The only balm is sovereign grace,
And the physician, God.”

The gospel, therefore, comes as the balm, the grace of God, to arrest that fell disease generated

in the soul by sin, to restore that ruined creature, man, to spiritual life, and to cause him to bloom in all the celestial vigour of spiritual health and peace. And whatever be the condition of man, the gospel is adapted to his state. Has sin darkened the understanding? The Spirit of God can flood it with light. And there is no understanding so dark but what it can enlighten. Has sin hardened the heart? The Spirit of God can make it soft and tender. And there is no heart so hard that it cannot melt down into tenderness and love. Has sin prostituted the affections? The Spirit of God can purify them; and there are no affections so debased by sin, but what it can make holy. This, then, is gospel, that we bring to you. But where these things are omitted, it is a deficient gospel. Let Christ, however, be set forth in the glories of his person, the perfection of his work, and the power of his grace,—as the bread of life, and the water of life,—as the atoning priest, and superior king,—and if men are acquainted with their true character, they will hail it as good news, and regard nothing in the world half so important or valuable as this. The gospel, therefore, we press on your attention, and urge home on your consciences and hearts. It is a

system of truths to be believed, embraced, and practised. It dwells on the “character, works, and designs of God,—man’s original and fallen condition,—the advent, death, mediation, and redemption of Jesus Christ,—the nature and necessity of faith in him,—the new birth, with its causes and evidences,—the sublime realities of the final judgment,—and the eternal states of all the dead.” These truths are to be felt in subduing the enmity of the heart,—in renewing the moral temper,—in enlarging our faculties,—and in producing in us the elevating power of vital religion. And they are to be exemplified in the life and conversation, as saith our Saviour, *By your fruits ye shall be known*. Reader, do they sway your mind, and govern your life? O! believe them, embrace them, and praise God for them for ever.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VIRTUES OF THE GOSPEL.

IN the Mirror of the Gospel we see its virtues. The virtues, or graces of the gospel, are faith, hope, love, gratitude, humility, joy, and peace.

The gospel produces faith. Faith is the act of the soul by which it lays hold on boundless merit and infinite strength. It is the steadfast look of the soul by which the character and salvation of the blessed Jesus are contemplated. It receives Christ, and relies on him for justification and salvation. It makes Christ its own, and appropriates the inconceivable fulness of blessing that is in him, as a supply for every varied and returning want. This christian grace is every where enforced in the sacred scriptures. Was the preface to the Bible taken out, an appropriate one might soon be found to be put in its place, in the ever memorable words of our Saviour, where he says, *These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing in him ye might have life.*

The advantages of faith are many. It justifies us in the sight of God. It secures to us an interest in the blessings of the new covenant—

mercy and love. It begets a sincere obedience in our lives and conversation. It sustains our minds under the most adverse circumstances in life. It enables us to rise superior to every difficulty in our way to the kingdom. It leads us to endure as seeing Him who is invisible, and to have respect unto the recompense of reward. It exalts us above the sphere of earthly enjoyments; it opens to us the most blissful prospects of the future; it assures us of the reality and worth of the substantial pleasures, and unfading happiness and bliss of heaven; it gives us an earnest longing after it, and enables us to look forwards to its enjoyment with the confidence of hope. But who can describe the advantages of faith? They are too great for description. "It removes mountains; it deprives the wilderness of its horrors; and the deepest solitude ceases to be solitary under its guidance. All that heaven and earth possess of beauty belongs to it; and with its treasures of heights and depths, it enriches its possessors. It brings that which is distant near, and merges the gloom of the present in the bliss of the future, painting the sky of many a departing sun with the dawning radiance of a better world. In the midst of sublunary changes, it anticipates a blissful paradise. It peoples our bereaved

family circles with holy and heavenly company, and associates both worlds in close connexion, uniting things past, present, and to come. In its light, the sacred narratives are acted over again, and our own personal history becomes a sacred record of providence. It has the power of realising the dead, as if they were alive. The patriarchs are our contemporaries, though their ashes repose in the sepulchre of near six thousand years. By its voice, they still converse with us, though to human ears they speak no more. Through its realization they visit us, in our darkness, with kindness and consolation. In its light, we see a host of them as witnesses encamped around us; and whatever favours they experienced are appropriated to ourselves through faith." And need we say more? Yes. It lays open to us the invisible world; it conducts us with firm and undaunted step across death's narrow isthmus into the regions of purity and bliss; it places us on the summit of the luminous hills of Paradise; it presents to us scenes of loveliness and beauty, endless in variety, over which our ravished eyes wander, without a cloud to dim or a limit to obstruct their sight; and it conducts us to the city, palace, and throne of God, where trees of life wave their ambrosial tops around, the rivers of salva-

tion flow forth, angels touch their harps of living melody, and saints in sweet response breathe forth to the listening heavens their grateful songs.

The gospel inspires hope. Hope is the first principle of practical efficacy, which imparts to us moral power. It darts into the depths of the soul a beam of quickening life. It animates us amid the depressions and gloom of mortality. It sustains us although we may be subject to innumerable trials and sorrows. It beckons us onward, though our road be rugged, our path thorny, our difficulties great, and our enemies numerous. It stimulates us in our endeavours to do good, seeing that our opportunities of usefulness are fast passing away—that the days of our ignominy and trial, mourning and woe, will soon be ended—and that the degree of our happiness in the world of harmony and joy will be regulated by the degree of our activity and success on earth, to check vice, quell faction, and to promote virtue, to train up men for heaven, to raise the temple of God amidst the ancient desolations, and to contribute towards the formation and perfection of that eternal society, which will flourish in inviolable purity and order, when all human associations shall be dissolved, and earth, and seas, and skies, shall

for ever have passed away from before the throne of God. It purifies our motives, exalts our aims, and refines our virtues, as we pursue our course through the windings of life, towards the ocean of eternity, like the stream that gushes from the mountain rock, and purifies itself as it flows along, deepening and widening in its course, until it rolls its flood of waters into the depths of the briny ocean.

It enables us to rejoice in God, whatever may be the difficulties that rise before us in life, or the storms of adversity that may murmur and hiss around us; even though *the fig tree should not blossom*, though there should be *no fruit in the vines*, though the *labour of the olive should fail*, the *fields yield no meat*, the *flock be cut off from the fold*, and though there should be *no herd in the stall*.

And with unwavering confidence it bids the soul, in the hour of death, bound into an infinitude of bliss, and rear its head with joy amid the solemn, stupendous, and overwhelming scenes of the last judgment, when

“ each mountain height
Outburns Vesuvius, and rocks eternal pour
Their melted mass, as rivers once they poured ;
And stars rush, and final ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o’er creation.”

O sacred hope ! O blissful hope ! What an enheartening visitor art thou ! How enlivening thy rays ! How powerful and sustaining are thine influences ! And how bright and cheering, smiling and heavenly, are thy prospects ! O ! is it embedded in the depths of our hearts ? Without this heavenly messenger, we literally can do nothing. The principle of evil, whatever the resolution or the vigour which we summon to counteract its power, has a dreadful mastery, until the prospect of deliverance opens to our view. Let us seek it. Let us cherish it. And let us yield ourselves to its influence, that we may participate in its pleasures, rejoice in its prospects, and long for its realization, when faith will end in sight, and hope terminate in the fulness of fruition.

Love is another virtue of the gospel. This is a charming grace. It is soft and tender in its nature, just in its dimensions, beautiful in its symmetry or form, lovely in its every aspect, unsullied in its purity, and bewitching and irresistible in its influence. " All the virtues have their appropriate place and rank in scripture. They are introduced as individually beautiful, and reciprocally connected, like the graces in the mythologic dance ; but perhaps no Christian

grace ever sat to the hand of a more consummate master than charity. Her incomparable painter, St. Paul, has drawn her at full length in all her fair proportions. Every attitude is full of grace. Every lineament of beauty. The whole delineation is perfect and entire, wanting nothing." With this grace let us seek familiar acquaintance. Let us view it in all its aspects, that we may be humbled by our want of conformity to it, and led to cherish a growing resemblance to it.

It presents to us all the graces which adorn the character, and make the man of God, and lays them open to our view like a bud in the midst of a beautiful flower—a flower in the midst of a beautiful garden—or a garden in the midst of a beautiful landscape.

The apostle Paul opposes them to the works of the flesh. *The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I told you before, as I have told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the*

fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.

These virtues are possessed by all true believers in Christ Jesus. Are they mine? Reader, are they thine? They are the true plants of renown, which are so lovely in the eyes of men, and valuable in the sight of God. Let us covet them, that they may cover with their vernal influences the desolations of our *inner man*, produce within us the buds and blossoms of spiritual life, and load us with the fruits of holiness and righteousness, which are to the praise and glory of God.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE AGENCY OF THE GOSPEL.

IN the Mirror of the Gospel, we see its agency. This is—the word, man, and the Spirit.

The word is the instrumental agent in effecting the salvation of men. It is the truth that maketh free. It is the truth that sanctifieth. The word of God is the repository of saving truth—the receptacle of every thing that is

vital, spiritual, heavenly, and divine—the great store-house which contains the germs of the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations—the fountain from whence spring all streams of peace, purity, and happiness—the pattern which reveals to us, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord—and the mould by which we are formed to the image of God, enstamped with the beauties of holiness, and enabled to shine in insufferable splendour and glory for ever, before the throne of God. • •

It has been sent from heaven for the express purpose of bringing men from darkness to light, from slavery to liberty, from sin to holiness, and from misery to happiness.

Wherever it has gone, it has proved itself to be the balm of life to the diseased soul, the grand regenerator of the human family, and the hope of the world. Darkness, superstition, and vice have fled before it, and righteousness, joy, and peace have sprung up in its path. “Beneath its genial power the thoughts of men have taken a more ample range—their affections have kindled with a diviner and purer flame—and motives have been supplied by considerations of the mightiest and tenderest import. Their whole being has been raised. Their moral

attitude has been changed. Their minds have been brought to beat in unison with the Divine intelligence itself, and their hearts have breathed their solicitude towards a dying world."

At the present moment it is shedding light upon the darkness, superstitions, and crimes of our world, and flashing across it with the brightness of the bow of promise to the young and rising generation, and to nations yet unborn; whilst multitudes are cherishing a profound reverence for the truth, seeking a deep insight into the fulness of its excellence, exercising a simple faith in its energy, resigning their whole being to its influence, attesting to its sublime and consoling influences, and panting for its universal spread.

It is every where required. Where it has not been diffused, *darkness covers the land, and gross darkness the people; and their habitations are full of cruelty.* And until the word of God is made known to them, from amid the dark and revolting scenes in which they dwell, they are destined to pass into the dreary regions of woe, to be surrounded with the blackness of darkness for ever. In broad and everlasting lines it is laid down in Holy Writ, that where *there is no vision the people perish.*

Impressed with this affecting consideration, the church of Christ is translating the scriptures into every language, and circulating them throughout the regions of the globe. In the amplitude of its range, it is embracing the universal family of man, and never will it pause in its lofty enterprise until it has conveyed to it the word of God. Facilities are opening on every hand to encourage it. Mountains are sinking, and the valleys are rising up, and the world is moving on in the path of knowledge, mercy, and improvement. And what shall stay it in its course? Atheism? Infidelity? Papacy? Puseyism? No. Beneath its indestructible and irresistible influence, these false systems will disappear; and over their graves it will march to the throne of universal dominion.

O! what an incentive to the church of Christ to renew its exertions in the dissemination of divine truth. And this is increased ad infinitum, when it is considered that the conversion of a sinner to God is of more importance now, than it was one hundred years ago. When a sinner was converted to God at that period, he went quietly, and methodically, and insensibly along to heaven. *He eat his morsel alone.* But now it is different. The Christian must be active.

“Whatever badge he may wear, or in whatever department of the Christian army he may hold a commission, he must be an alien and a traitor,” says Dr. Redford, “who can treat with indifference the general proposal of augmenting the energy and extending the operations of the aggressive system. He is not a true soldier of the cross who is content to remain within the ramparts, and who is satisfied with present conquests.”

Man is the human agent. The voice of Omnipotence that bid Lazarus come forth from the regions of the grave, could have stript him of his clothes. But man could do that, and God never does that which he can accomplish. Dr. Richard Winter Hamilton, in his own lucid and graphic style, says, “God has his province, and we have ours. He does not take our work, and we must not usurp his. There is his prerogative, let us not infringe on that. There is our obligation, and assuredly God will find nothing to substitute for it. And he who appeals to God, *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord*, must equally appeal to Zion.”

God has deposited in her the gospel. He has committed to Zion the administration of

heaven's healing balm for the diseased souls of men, the dispensing of gifts more precious than those of miracle and prophecy, and given her a sacred commission to convey it to the world, that all may participate in its benefits, and be enriched with its blessings. And she is to stir up her strength to discharge the trust reposed in her, in obedience to the mandate of her Lord and Master.

God has possessed her with men who breathe the spirit of the gospel, men who are qualified to make it known, and who are panting to diffuse it, and she is to stir up her strength to send them forth into the high places of the field. He has endowed her with vast and extensive wealth, and she is to stir up her strength to bring out her resources, and to bring them to bear on the destinies of the world in the grand work of converting sinners to God. He has also given to her power and influence, and she is to stir up her strength to exert it in seeking to accomplish the beneficent designs of infinite mercy and love to the human race.

And has God manifested his glory in seeking the happiness of men? O! how infinitely worthy a purpose is it in any of the sons and daughters of Zion, to advance his glory in pro-

moting the salvation of a lost world, however exalted may be their rank or station, or however humble their circumstances may be in life—whether they may wear brilliant diadems, or sit on a dunghill—be clothed with robes of purple and fine linen, or throw the shuttle.

“That believers in Christ Jesus who compose his church may be useful, God,” says Dr. Cotton Mather, “has given them a power and an opportunity to serve him, which gives them a right to it, and makes the doing of it a duty.” Amongst believers there is a great variety of gifts. *He gave some apostles ; and some prophets ; and some evangelists ; and some pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ : till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* Some have more gifts than others. To one is given ten talents, to another five, to another two, and to another one. For the exercise of these gifts, and for the opportunities of employing them, believers are responsible, and must give an account to God. *Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us,*

whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

There are various ways in which Christians may be useful. They can impart the elements of scriptural knowledge to the young. They are the hope of the church. From their ranks the church of Christ is to be supplied with new members. By them its various offices are to be sustained, and the plans of usefulness which are now in operation will have to be maintained and carried out. O! with what intense interest ought we to turn to the young. If we plant our feet in some deep valley, and look upon the rising mountains which run to the right and left, what emotions possess our bosoms! If we ascend the mountains, and from their summits gaze upon the rising cities in the wide spread plains below, those emotions become more deep and powerful. But when we look on the rising mind, amongst the young that crowd around us in countless numbers every where, our emotions gush from the deep fountains of our hearts.

Many look upon the young with peculiar interest, and many are the tendrils of affection which entwine themselves around their tender hearts. The Christian, however, ought to view them with the most agonising concern for their welfare; and with the most throbbing anxiety, and unwearied assiduity, should seek to promote their interests. Sabbath-schools open to him great facilities to claim the rising mind for God, and to rear it for eternity,—to train it for usefulness on earth, and glory, honour, and immortality, in the world to come. Multitudes have entered these nurseries for the young, and by their devoted activity have gained for themselves glory and renown. Their names may not have been chronicled in the hoary register of time, “but when the deeds of heroes,” says John Angell James, “have been passed over in silence, or mentioned with reprobation,—when poets, except those who have sung to the harp of piety—and philosophers, except such as have employed their researches to manifest the glory of the First Cause,—shall sink down without distinction into the general mass, then shall the holy, useful teacher, attended by his children he had been the means of reclaiming, be presented before the face of an assembled universe,

arrayed with infinite honour and glory ; and not all the mighty hosts of patriarchs and prophets, apostles and evangelists, reformers and martyrs, ministers and missionaries, pressing to receive their crowns, throw him into obscurity, or deprive him of his reward. But amid surrounding millions, he shall stand single and apart to receive the plaudits of his Judge,—*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* O ! what dignity, honour, and happiness is reserved for them. The men who have improved and adorned their country by the splendid creations of their genius, have had their names emblazoned in the temples of fame, and have received all the glory which admiring generations could confer on their memory. But what is it when compared with the distinctions and praises which will be heaped on him who has caused righteousness to flow down the street like a river, erected the temples of the Holy Ghost, and multiplied the living images of the great God ?”

They can circulate religious tracts. Concerning a lady in Spain, it is said that she made up a packet of corn, and sent it to her friends in

the Spanish territories of South America, with the inscription upon it,—Give some to one, and some to another. The instructions were complied with, and from that little packet of corn now proceeds all the corn that is grown in that country. Religious tracts contain seeds of truth. From little packets of these, distributed abroad, may proceed the most magnificent and extensive results. Christians, a word to the wise is enough. Let the hint thrown out suffice. With your little packets of tracts, therefore, go forth, and give some to one, and some to another, that the seeds of truth which they contain, through the fertilizing influence of the Holy Spirit, may germinate, and over-run districts, islands, continents, and the world, and yield an immense harvest of fruit, to the praise and glory of God.

They may throw in a word for the Redeemer. When this is well timed, it is *like apples of gold in baskets of silver*. And that you may estimate its importance, think of the amazing effect of a single conversation. The great Dr. Harris tells us, that “every conversation leaves an effect on the minds of those who engage in it, so that never do we come out from such intercourse the same persons as we entered. The most casual remark—the softest whisper—lives for ever in its

effects. Every word tells for eternity. Hence it is that every idle word which men utter, assumes a character so important that it will form a distinct subject of inquest in the general judgment. And hence it is that the Christian is taught to regard the faculty of speech as a means of grace. In the salvation of the cross, the gospel has supplied him with a theme of which his heart is supposed to be full. Every man he meets is interested in it as deeply as himself. Every unconverted person he addresses is perishing through the want of it. Every conversation he holds affords him an opportunity of introducing it. Unless he speaks they may die in ignorance of it. He is held responsible for every truth he might have uttered, but omitted; and for every soul that perishes through that neglect. His words are no longer his own. As if his lips had been touched with sacred fire, or sprinkled with consecrating blood, he is to stand in the midst of his social circle as the oracle of the cross; as if his was the only tongue on earth that could testify of salvation by Christ, he is to regard himself as being set apart to bear witness in its behalf."

They can aid the cause of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. Its province is to make

men sober, and to keep them so. This is the design of its institution. It is the work to which it is committed. It is all that it professes to accomplish. It constitutes the beginning and consummation of its aim.

It is called into existence in consequence of a great evil. This evil is intemperance.

It is a physical evil. This is shewn in the palsied limb, the blood-shot eye, the sallow complexion, and the enfeebled and enervated frame of almost every drunkard. It affects his brain, destroys his nerves, and corrupts his blood. It impairs his constitution, breaks up his frame, and brings him to a premature grave.

It is a relative evil. It affects husbands, wives, parents, children, neighbours, and friends. It steepens them in poverty, and covers them with rags. It produces alienation and strife, confusion and every evil work. It desolates their homes, and fills their woe-cup to the brim.

It is a national evil. It fills our poor-houses with paupers; our asylums with lunatics; our jails with convicts; and our penal settlements with transports.

It is a universal evil. It every where prevails. It rages from the centre to the circumference of our country, and of our world. And in its

course, it moves onwards against the pulpit and the press; the magistrate and the divine; the threats of men and the commands of God.

It is a complicated evil. It is the parent of almost every other evil. It travels with a huge train of vices, and requires the whole width of the way to give it room. There is a story current in Spain that the devil once promised a priest to make him a bishop, on one of three conditions; that he should kill his brother, violate his sister, or get drunk. "To get drunk," said the priest, "is a small matter. I will get drunk." "Agreed," replied Satan. The priest accordingly got drunk, and whilst intoxicated, committed the other two enormities.

It is a fatal evil. It is fatal to industry, frugality, and property; domestic comfort and national prosperity—morality and religion—the best interests of men for time and for eternity. It is their ruin for both worlds. It rides roughshod over men on earth, destroying every thing that is amiable and lovely in man, and fascinating in lovely woman; and at death it ushers men into the presence of God to be stricken, smitten, blasted, and withered with the wrath of God for ever.

Total abstinence is an efficient remedy.

Hundreds, thousands, and millions have tried it. It has improved their health, bettered their circumstances, increased their domestic happiness, promoted the prosperity of our nation, and opened facilities for the spread of the gospel, and the advancement of the divine glory in the salvation of men.

It is universally applicable. Amongst those who have tried it, and found benefit from it, are men of all ranks, professions, and circumstances. We have reformed drunkards, including females as well as males. If one drunkard only had been rescued from the vortex of intemperance, been brought to cast away the badge of his ignoble slavery, and to walk elate in the enjoyment of a blessed emancipation, it would have been worth all the money, time, labour, and sacrifices which have been made to achieve such a good. We are not left however to count them by units, but by hundreds and thousands.

We have moderate men saved from drunkenness. By total abstinence multitudes have been preserved in the enjoyment of true temperance, that might now have been drunkards, ruined for all moral and useful purposes in life, and blighted in their prospects for both worlds. It is laudable to seek the reformation of a drunkard ;

but it is more commendable to prevent men from becoming drunkards.

We have medical men,—men of considerable experience, and highly respectable standing in society,—who have enquired into the subject, discussed its merits, yielded to conviction, and are now amongst its most strenuous advocates to urge its adoption, and to promote its spread. Mr. Courtnay, of Ramsgate, says, “ I never knew a man in health benefited by their habitual use in any quantity, and when taken in what is commonly called moderation, say three or four glasses of wine a day, or a pint of ale, they are in my opinion, productive of much injury, and the occasion of premature death to thousands and tens of thousands of the human race.” Thomas Beaumont, of Bradford, Yorkshire, says, “ In my own professional experience, I am increasingly satisfied of the validity of the principles of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. For whilst, on the one hand, I have daily evidence of the injuries sustained by their use,—on the other, I have accumulating proof of the immense advantages of an opposite system.” Dr. Abernethy says, that sending a dose of salts into the human system, is like a troop of Arabs entering a quiet and peaceful

village! If so, what must intoxicating drinks be like? How great the injuries which they must inevitably inflict! How dreadful the ravages that they must commit!

We have ministers of religion who have embraced the principle, and are lending the weight of their influence and talents to diffuse it. J. A. James says, "I feel bound to give my example to the cause, that I might upon consistent ground reason with the drunkard." William Jay, of Bath, says, "The subject of teetotalism I have examined physically, morally, and christianly; and after all my reading, reflection, observation, and experience, I have reached a very firm and powerful conviction. I believe that next to the glorious gospel, God could not bless the human race so much as by the abolition of all intoxicating drinks." Richard Knill says, "In order to recruit my wasted strength, I sometimes took beer, or porter, or wine, at supper. Then in the morning, I had a little head-ache, or felt nervous, or had a white tongue; yea, so white that I spoke of it to a kind friend in Yorkshire, and he actually brought me a tongue-scraper, but never advised me to abstain from wine and strong drink. I mentioned this to another friend in Norfolk,

who assured me that my incessant labours kept up such excitement, that I should have a white tongue as long as I lived. But now the secret is come out. I preach oftener than most men, yet sleep well, have no head-ache, no white tongue, and very little exhaustion. The secret is this. I never drink wine, or spirits, or porter, or beer, or cider, or any other fermented or intoxicating liquor. The pure water from the spring is my beverage, and I never was so well since I became a preacher." "To the millions," says Dr. Campbell, "we believe total abstinence not only to be physically safe, but highly beneficial. Its universal adoption for five years, would do more to aid in the moral renovation of the empire than all the magistrates, moralists, jurists, and legislators in the universe. Nine-tenths of the crime, poverty, and disease are attributable to strong drink. It is one of the most serious obstacles to the spread of the gospel amongst the millions, and to the social improvement of nations. The former cannot punish nations into virtue, the latter cannot legislate them into happiness. Police, fleets, and armies may repress violence, but they cannot reach the disease which rages in the heart of the body politic."

We have vast multitudes from amongst the working classes, who have embraced it, and join to recommend it for the good of others,—persons subject to the hardest labour, and yet have experienced no abatement of strength, but are more equal to any laborious occupation than they were before.

Total abstinence has been rapid and extensive in its spread. It has exceeded our most sanguine expectations. At first, we had almost insurmountable obstacles to overcome, and difficulties well nigh overwhelming. We had a mighty array of ignorance, prejudice, and class interest to contend with. We had to grapple with the passions and customs which have been wedded, and bedded, and riveted in the hearts and affections of the vast portion of the community. We had ministers of religion and medical men, with a few bright and glorious exceptions, almost to a man against us. The press, the great leviathan of the day, has almost been exclusively in the hands of the enemy, and the missiles of calumny and reproach have been hurled against us. But Alpine as have been our difficulties, and mighty as have been the storms and tempests which have raged and murmured around us, the ramparts of prejudice

have been mounted, and the bulwarks of intemperance have been assailed, and many a breach has been made in her hardened walls. Success has every where crowned our efforts, and cheering and heavenly have been the results. Look to America; look to Ireland; look to Wales; and look around you;—and you have abundant evidence of this. Past success is a pledge of ultimate and universal success, and it ought to stimulate us to more vigorous, determined, and persevering efforts to spread the principle of total abstinence until the monster, intemperance, is driven from his last refuge, and deprived of his last victim, and with his dying groans proclaims the freedom of an emancipated world.

But objections are raised against the principle. It is stated we go too far. How far ought we to go? Can we go too far in that which is good? Our principle is the glory of our system, and till a better is found we ought to embrace it, propagate it, and cling to it with the most tenacious grasp. It is urged that we degrade ourselves by associating with those who are beneath us in life. Is respectability always united with title, wealth, and literature? May there not be all these, and yet those who possess them be infamous in vice? What constitutes respecta-

bility, but morality ? However a man may be exalted in life, or humble, if he has a good moral character, he is a respectable man. There is more hope of an abstainer becoming a respectable man, than a drunkard ; and there is great credit due to those who seek to raise the drunkard from ignorance and vice, to morality, comfort, happiness, and peace.

We view it as a handmaid to religion—a John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Lord. As the star heralds the morning sun, so total abstinence is the forerunner to the spread of the gospel. It opens facilities for its spread : it levels mountains, and fills up valleys, that the everlasting chariot of the gospel may move onwards in its course, until the glory of the Lord is every where revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

They can give of their money to aid the cause of Christ. The rich man can give his talent, and the poor man his mite. Neither of them can be dispensed with : both are indispensably necessary to sustain and carry on the various schemes of Christian enterprise in which the church of Christ is engaged, and into the treasury of the Lord they ought to be cheerfully cast. God demands it,—the world looks for it,

—and its eternal welfare requires it. O ! bring before you the claims of Christ in all their magnitude and extent ; turn them over in your minds ; ponder them in your hearts before God ; and then ask, What have I done for Him who has done so much for me ? what can I do ? and under a deep sense of your obligations to God, consecrate yourselves and your substance to Him.

They can pray for the enlargement of his kingdom. And oh ! what a mighty engine of usefulness is prayer—prayer presented in the name of Christ—prayer centered in his mediation—prayer put into the hands of the Angel of the Covenant, who is our intercessor before the throne—the prayer of faith. To what advantage may it be worked ! Oh, what cataracts of blessings, and deluges of mercy, it may bring down upon our world ! *Prove me herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.* Every Christian ought to do something to promote the cause of Christ. When the ancient idolaters made cakes for the queen of heaven, they found something for all to do. The children gathered wood, the fathers kindled

the fire, and the women kneaded the dough. The humble weaver and the wealthy merchant, the poor mechanic and the illustrious prince, the old and young, the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, may here make common cause, and become fellow-helpers to the truth.

Every Christian ought to be encouraged to do something. None should be discouraged. The meanest talent may find employment. The field is unbounded, and success is certain to those who heartily, and earnestly, and prayerfully seek to do good.

Every Christian ought to be determined to do something. Nothing good can be effected without resolution, and a vigorous determination to carry it into effect. This is shewn in the case of the cobbler, and a certain Marquis who filled the office of ranger in Richmond Park. The Marquis having blocked up one of the foot-paths which went across the park, the poor cobbler brought an action into Court against him, in which the Marquis was cast. On being asked how he dared to go to law with the Marquis, he replied, I did not like to leave the world worse than I found it. This is worthy of the imitation of those who are engaged in a

nobler cause, swayed by nobler motives, and seeking the attainment of a nobler end.

Every Christian ought to seek to do something now. Time is flying. Men are dying, and sinking into the perdition of eternity, whilst the gulph of perdition is deepening and widening every hour to receive them. The command of Christ urges them to this, and the examples of good men ought to stimulate to it. And besides, they are mortal, and must soon pass the boundaries of mortality, and answer for all their opportunities of doing good, whilst on earth. Let him, therefore, that can teach, teach now. Let him that can give, give now. Let him that can write, write now. Let him that can distribute, distribute now. Let him that can pray, pray now. Let him that can do any of these, do them now. Let him that can do all of them, do them now. "Brethren," says Dr. Campbell, "bestir yourselves. Men of God, arise. Inspire the people. Put the entire mass in motion, till every church becomes a spiritual camp, where every man is a soldier, and where even the children know the use of arms. Then will the war of truth be prosecuted in the spirit of its origin, and our beloved land—and may we not add, through it the world—shall be filled with

the tokens of a Saviour's presence, and overspread with the triumphs of a Saviour's power."

Every Christian ought to do something to the last moment of his existence. Every action which we perform in the cause of Christ, is a seed sown, the fruit of which we shall reap for ever. And O ! what happiness is experienced by those who are able to say, " I endeavoured to cultivate that field, to break up that barren ground, to sow that seed; and now, behold what a crop. One comes, and says, The word you dropt on a certain occasion, became the word of life to my soul. A second rises up, and says, The tract you put into the hand of that ignorant man, has, under God, been the means of his conversion—that school instituted has been a nursery for God; and many are praising God in heaven, who there first learnt to praise him on earth. But behold a crowd surrounds your door! And who are these? These are the children of these indigent parents, who now grown up to maturity, are come to testify their gratitude to their kind benefactor; and to say, Let a thousand blessings rest on his head. He visited us in the day of our calamity, and lent an ear to the tale of our distress. He pitied our sorrows, and raised us from misery and

ruin. The God of peace be with him. And when he comes to the grave, may it be as the ripe shock of corn in its season."

What a sweet reflection it must be in death to be able to look back on a life well spent in the fear of God. O ! how tranquillizing it must be to the mind ! How joyous to the spirit ! What a divine complacency must beam from the countenance ! And soft must be the pillow of death !

Every Christian ought to do something, as he will wish he had done when he comes to die. O ! place yourselves on the bed of death. Apprehend and realize your last dissolution. Suppose that your last solemn hour had arrived, —that your breath was failing, and your throat rattling, and the cold sweat of death resting on your pale cheeks and emaciated limbs. In this condition, what would you have done more than you have already done for your own souls, your families, or the church of God ? "Was this exercise attended to," says Dr. Cotton Mather, "O ! how it would regulate the lives of men. How watchful they would become. And what an incredible number of good works it would produce in the world."

The Holy Spirit is the grand agent in the

scheme of salvation. The bible may be read to you,—its doctrines preached,—its precepts, threatenings, and promises revealed. You may attend on the ordinances of religion, give alms to the poor, and make long prayers. Your judgments may be informed, your consciences roused, and your passions excited by the fervid eloquence of an Apollos; but all will be in vain, unless the Spirit takes of the things of Christ, in all their transforming power and influence, and shews them to the soul. The truth may shine in [all the brightness of meridian noon, divine love may whisper in its sweetest tones, and the thunders of divine vengeance may roll in all their fearful majesty; but *the flesh profiteth nothing; it is the Spirit that quickeneth. It is not by might, or power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

The Holy Spirit is set forth in scripture under various emblems, such as wind, fire, water, etc. One of its most beautiful emblems is the dew. This figure is descriptive of a divine influence in the believer's mind. The dew quickens that which is dead; even so does the Holy Spirit. Naturally we are devoid of spiritual life; but the Holy Spirit implants a new life in the soul. *And you hath he*

*quicken*ed, says an apostle, *who were dead in trespasses and in sins.*

The dew makes what is barren fruitful; so does the Holy Spirit. The heart of man in its unregenerate state, is like the barren heath in the desert; but divine grace covers it with the buds and blossoms of spiritual fruit,—makes the wilderness a fruitful field,—and the fruitful field a garden for the Lord.

The dew is refreshing; so is the influence of the Holy Spirit. It drops like the rain and the dew upon the tender herb.

The dew is invigorating. When it fell in the wilderness, it contained in it manna for the Israelites to eat; so the graces of the Holy Spirit are the hidden manna which he is pleased to bestow on his spiritual Israel, and that causes their inward man to be renewed day by day.

The dew is silent in its operations: they are scarcely perceptible to human observation. So is the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul; it is still, it is deep, it is retiring, it is free. O, resist not his influences, but covet them! Improve his happy visitations in your souls—those gales of the Spirit—those unexpected influences of light and power, “which,” says Robert Hall, “no assiduity in the means of grace can com-

mand ; but which it is a great point of wisdom to improve, as much more may then be done towards the advancement of our spiritual interests ; and with hearts full of adoring gratitude to God, praise him for its bestowment, as it is the office of the Holy Spirit to soften the obduracy of the human heart, to fix that which is as inconstant as the wind, to excite attention, arouse the dormant faculties, to subdue and overcome the bondage of corruption, and to cause those hearts which were barren of all good, and prolific of all evil, to bring forth in rich abundance the fruits of holiness, and happiness, and heaven."

Here then is the scheme. "Man plants and waters—God gives the increase. Man draws the bow at a venture—God wings the arrow, and makes it sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, whereby the people fall under him. And he claims the whole of the glory to himself, making it a motto of our religion, which never must be contravened or controverted,—*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.* In all our exertions for the propagation of Christianity, and in all our expectations of final victory amongst the nations of the earth, we must ascribe to the

Spirit of God all the glory, and regard him as being all in all. There is not a disorder to be quelled, a pollution to be purified, a wrong to be redressed, a misery to be averted, a hope to be inspired, a grace to flourish, or a good to be imparted, but by Him. There is not a spot that is enlightened on the surface of the globe, not a waste place that is reclaimed, an idol that is renounced, a heart that is renewed, or an ingredient that is shed into the cup of human enjoyment, but by Him. It is Him first, Him last, Him midst, and Him without end." And he has only to come forth according to his promise, and speak as he did at the time when creation started out of primeval chaos, and another creation, exceeding the former in splendour and beauty, will issue forth from the chaos of darkness in which the moral universe has been enveloped so long. And then, when Jehovah looks down and pronounces it to be very good, again the morning stars will sing together, and all the sons of God will shout aloud for joy.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE EFFICIENCY OF GOSPEL AGENCY.

THIS depends on the purity of the word, the piety, character, and ability of man, and the application of the truth by the Holy Spirit to the heart.

In order to accomplish the beneficent designs of infinite mercy and love, the word of God must be pure. Water is good when it is drawn pure from the stream ; but when the spring has been poisoned, it carries with it the elements of destruction. The doctrines and truths, the blessings and privileges, of the gospel are good ; but when corrupted and deteriorated, they are destructive to the interests of men, both spiritual and temporal, present and future.

The word of God has come to us in all its purity. And O ! what a precious gift it is. Sir William Jones says, " It contains more sublime history, finer specimens of oratory, and more exalted strains of poetry, than all other books put together." The immortal Locke tells us, that " it is truth without any admixture of error." John Newton said, " I have many books which I cannot sit down to read ; they are indeed good

and sound, but like half-pence, there goes a great quantity to a little amount. There are silver books, and a few golden books; but I have one book worth more than all, called the Bible, and that is a book of bank notes." But the most perfect eulogium that has ever been passed upon it, is to be found in the spontaneous burst of applause, uttered by David, the sweet singer of Israel, where he says, *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold. Sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb.*

The Jews for thousands of years were its conservators; but when it suited their purpose they became its opponents, and laboured to destroy it. The followers of Christ, however, endured deaths often, to preserve and to convey to us the inestimable boon. "It has been committed to us by a hand stretched out from the flame. It has been sent to us from the

dungeon. It has been bequeathed to us from the wreck. It is the legacy of a noble army of martyrs." O! what value do we set upon the gift divine? Do we properly and suitably appreciate it? If so, let us seek to preserve it in its purity,—to diffuse it around us, and wheresoever we are able to make it known,—and to hand it down as an heir-loom to nations yet unborn.

Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, reformers, puritans, and nonconformists; saints and angels; the church and the world; heaven and hell, demand this of us, and it is of infinite importance that we should enter into the spirit of our duty, as infidelity, atheism, papacy, and puseyism are rampant, and make common cause against the Word; the one party by exalting *tradition, and making the commandment of God of none effect*; and the other by pouring upon it in burning torrents their ribaldry and scorn.

Let us have no life, therefore, but in the truth. Let it be enthroned within us. Let us anticipate nothing for it but victory. Let us be filled with its spirit, and like a strong man running in a race, let us throw every energy into the work of diffusing it, that it may go

forth in its simplicity and majesty, the self-telling evidence of its goodness and glory, as the champion of heaven's rights, and the almoner of heaven's gifts. Then will the clouds of superstition and error which hang over us, pass away. Then will the dawn of light, liberty, and love, which has come upon us, increase more and more until in the period of the millennium, *brother shall not say unto brother, Know the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest. Then God will comfort Zion, comfort all her waste places, make her wilderness like Eden, her desert a garden of the Lord: joy and thanksgiving shall be found therein, and the voice of melody.*

The efficiency of gospel agency depends on the piety, character, and ability of man. Piety is the first qualification for usefulness amongst Christians. Till men are renewed by the Spirit of God, they are dead, dead, dead, whilst they live—dead to the enjoyment of spiritual life—dead to a glorious hope of immortal blessedness—dead to the comforts of the gospel—and dead to the great end of human existence. And eminent piety is essential to eminent usefulness in the cause of Christ. We are called upon zealously to imitate the Saviour's love. "This,"

says Dr. Redford, "must become our passion. It must not be merely a live coal, it must be a fire ; it must not merely be warm, it must burn and flame." In compliance, therefore, with the requisition of our Saviour, where he says, *Son, give me thine heart*, let us make a solemn, cheerful, and eternal surrender of ourselves to Him ; and then with hearts glowing with light and love, let us seek to diffuse the gospel around us, and every where, that it may arrest the progress of degeneracy, raise the standard of morality, and erect monuments that present to the world the august image of virtue in her sublimest form, from which streams of light and glory may issue to remotest times and ages.

Ability to communicate divine truth to those around us, is another qualification. This was possessed by the primitive Christians to a considerable extent. When the word of God had sounded within them, they immediately began to sound it around them ; and as they went forth to make known the wonderful story of redeeming love, it is said that *the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord*. "By all that is powerful in thought, and chaste in style,—by just sentiments and solid reasons,—by familiar illus-

trations and graphic delineations,—by bursts of passion in appeal to the heart,—by the soft, the bold, the honourable, and the tender," let us imitate their example, and seek to make our way to the understandings and hearts—to the intellects, feelings, and souls, of those around us.

Another qualification is character. A man that has no character is ruined for all moral and useful purposes in life. But the man that has a good character has nothing to fear, whatever his circumstances may be. A consciousness of integrity bears him triumphantly along, and enables him to rise superior to every difficulty, and to outride every storm in life. The foundation of character is centered in moral principle, and manifested in the virtuous conduct of the life. There can be no Christian character without this. And as the Christian is the highest style of man, he is called upon *so to let his light shine, that others seeing his good works may glorify our Father which is in heaven.* He is to be a living epistle of Christ: he is to bear such a transcript of Christ—such an epitome of his beauty and worth, that men may learn from him what Christ is. Christians, as the salt of the earth, and as the lights of the world, let us seek a deep-rooted hatred

to sin, supreme love to Jesus Christ, and an ardent desire to attain to a complete assimilation to his blessed and glorious image, that our distinctive characters may stand out in bold relief before the world, that holiness to the Lord may beam forth from our countenances, be exemplified in our conversation, and manifested in our deportment, that we may shed a lustre over our path in life, and that God may be glorified in our salvation.

The efficiency of gospel agency also depends on the application of divine truth to the heart by the Holy Spirit. *A Paul may plant, an Apollos water, but God gives the increase*, says the apostle of the Gentiles; *and neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.* "There is no power either human or angelic," says Dr. Burder, "that can change the purpose, or rectify the dispositions of the heart of man. You may apply force and compulsion to the body; you may subject it to the scourge, to the torture, and to the rack; but you cannot by any corrosive means revolutionize the sentiments of the mind, subdue its passions, or change its affections. You may suggest considerations, and urge inducements well adapted to the purpose

at which you aim. You may employ all the tenderness of parental affection, and all the dignified authority of magisterial power, and all the penetrating sagacity of one who well knows the most direct avenues to the heart ; but independent of Divine agency, all is to no purpose. The desired change is perfectly easy for the Omnipotent to effect. He has a key which opens every heart ; he can touch the springs of every mind, and conduct into a new channel the current of affections ; and most worthy of himself is the mode by which the renewal is effected." This is the word of truth. *Believers are born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* We can have no saving knowledge of God, but in and by his word. A savoury and practical writer says, "We must look through that glass upon him, and that appearance of God there is the beginning of all religion. The word never comes with power to our consciences, until God appears in them. God lets himself down into our hearts through the apprehensions of our faith, which frames in our hearts a right image of God, answerable to the character he gives of himself in his word. He shines through the

word in all his glory. When he spake of old to the patriarchs by an articulate voice, the unwritten word was then accompanied with such convincing signs of his presence, that they could not but believe it. Even so the written word represents God to us, when he reveals himself to us. The letter of the word is but a creature ; but the truths contained in it are eternal, and do all centre in God himself, who is the essential Word. Thus God rises out of the word and speaks to men, saying, *Thus saith the Lord, I am the Lord God Almighty, who now speak unto you.* He leaves no objection unanswered, and shews what sure grounds of faith we have in him. Shall God say, and not do ? It is impossible for God to lie : it must be so as God says : it cannot be otherwise. Heaven and earth shall sooner pass away than one tittle of the word be broken. Thus in God we praise his word. Consider the word out of God, and it will puzzle men and angels to make out the meaning of it. The things spoken of in it would be impossible. But all things are possible with God, and to those who believe in him. They stick at nothing : they are sure Omnipotency knows no difficulties ; the counsel of the Lord must stand ; his thoughts shall

come to pass. A soul thus struck with a sense of God's presence, yields immediately,—I believe, Lord, with all my heart, and am ready to do whatsoever thou requirest of me. The knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, is one thing—the knowledge of the truth as it is in ink and paper, is another. They are the same truths, but as they are in the Scriptures, they lie in the dead letter—as they are in Christ, they are seen in their living root and principle from whence they spring. Mere scriptural knowledge is but historical. We look upon things we read and hear rather as notions than realities. Till God fill up all expressions of scripture concerning himself with a divine presence answerable thereunto, we believe nothing that is said of him; but such a presence of God in his word captivates our hearts to the belief of it. We must believe him to be such a God as the word declares him to be, before we shall count all his sayings true; so that until God appears, and shews himself to the soul, all that is said to us out of the scriptures will not produce any effect, for *no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*. God has invisible ways of access to our hearts: he conveys himself through his truth to our souls.

His divinity leads the way ; without some appearance of this, the contents of the word would have no place in our hearts ; but coming with so great a presence, and in so great a name, and with so strong an impression, God himself working upon the heart, we cannot but receive his testimony. The word comes into our hearts suddenly before we are aware, and seizes them for God ; and hence we cannot but speak, think, act, and judge as God does. The sense of the word is the sense of our souls, so far as the word is written in our hearts. We read it without the least variation. The copy answers the original."

Where there is no word, there is nothing which God can bless. And where there is no prayer for the divine blessing, there is nothing which God will bless. *I will, saith God, be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them.*

In ages not far remote, few and feeble were the efforts made to diffuse the gospel by the church of Christ. The ministry of the gospel was looked upon chiefly as a ministry of comfort, instead of reconciliation. The great Andrew Fuller, at one period of his ministry, concentrated his energies in endeavouring to administer the consoling doctrines of Christian-

ity ; but the more he directed his energies to comfort his people, the more they sank in despondency and gloom ; the features of despair were stamped on the aspect of every countenance : but when he proposed some plan of aggressive effort in the cause of Christ, they were drawn out of themselves, and joy beamed on every side.

Our forefathers have also been wont to pray, that God, by means best known to himself, would accomplish the purposes of his grace, as if there were a mystery in connexion with the mode by which he was pleased to effect the salvation of men, and as if he had not pointed it out to them.

These notions, however, to a great extent, have evaporated. The true light now shines ; and the church of Christ is rising from her slumbers, and girding herself for the conflict in which superstition is to be unveiled, idolatry overturned, distinctions between cast and colour removed, the chain of bondsmen broken, the man of sin bound and destroyed, and Christ exalted to reign and rule over ransomed myriads, whilst angels exult and shout, *The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.*

The urgent necessity of this will appear if we consider for a moment the state of the world. "The map of the world," says Philipppo, "spread out beneath the eye of the Christian philanthropist, presents an appalling region of moral desolation. What unrelenting tyranny! What horrid and disgusting scenes of error! Every devout heart must thrill with agonizing emotions, and every enlightened imagination recoil, overshadowed with gloom, from a scene, throughout which death reigns with such unlimited sway. China is enthralled and bowed down by a grovelling and debasing superstition. Persia, Arabia, and Asiatic Turkey groan beneath the dominion of the false prophet. The teeming millions of Hindostan are still wedded to loathsome idols. Africa lies engulfed in a darkness as profound as that which veiled Egypt during the prolonged and fearful night when no man knew his brother. Instruments of cruelty are in her habitations. Her dismal altars are at this moment streaming with human blood, and groaning beneath the weight of murdered victims, while her strength is consumed by intestine wars, and merciless oppression." Every where, sin, like some river overflowing its banks, has sent forth its floods of ruin, to

destroy every thing that is lovely and beautiful and fair in the creation of God.

The work devolving on the church of Christ is boundless in extent. The field is the world. It includes every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Amongst the teeming myriads of its inhabitants, six hundred millions are in a heathenish state. It has been said that "if these were instructed and converted at the rate of one thousand a day, it would require one thousand and six hundred years to embrace the whole. Or if it was considered that three generations of men pass away every century, it would take, at the rate of one thousand a day, not less than forty-eight generations of men to instruct and convert the whole."

O ! what a claim has the world upon our sympathies. "If self is to be the centre of our charity," says Dr. Leifchild, "the circumference is to be the world."

"Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,—
Another still, and still another spreads.
Friends, parents, neighbours, first it will embrace ;
His country next, and next the human race :
Wide, and more wide, the o'erflowings of the mind,
Take every creature in of every kind."

It has a powerful claim upon our energies to carry to them the gospel. The world has no religion or purity of its own. Where then is the door of its hope? It is the gospel. This gospel is to be presented to them in a living form by its converts and disciples. In its conveyance there must be a firm dependence on the Spirit of God for success, and ardent prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit, that our efforts may be crowned with abundant success.

It has a strong claim upon us, also, for our property, to send forth the gospel, and men breathing its spirit and qualified to make it known, that all may hear of Christ's love to man, be transformed by its influence, and live before God.

To this we are bound. The gospel is a trust. Christians are stewards of the manifold grace of God; and the treasure is his, though he puts it in earthen vessels; and we must be careful neither to defile nor hoard it. It is his light, and we must vividly reflect it. It is his bread, which came down from heaven, and we must dispense it with as free a hand as that which first bestowed it.

That we may discharge the trust reposed in us, and accelerate the progress of the Redeemer's

kingdom in the world, let us aid in the dissemination of divine truth to the utmost extent of our power—exercise a firm and implicit dependence on God in all our efforts to do good—and in our hearts ascend to him, crying mightily for the influence of the Holy Spirit; then *God, even our own God, will bless us; and his dominion will extend from sea to sea, and from the flood unto the world's end.*

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE PROSPECTS OF GOSPEL AGENCY.

IN the Mirror of the Gospel we see its prospects. Society contains the germ of progression. Whether we look to the virtuous and the good, or to the wicked and profane, this sentiment is every where re-echoed, that there is no standing still. Every thing is advancing for good or evil, rising higher, or sinking lower, like the sun in its downward course, which sets in darkness, or its early dawn and expanding glory, when it rises on our world.

The church of Christ has made vigorous attempts at different periods of the world to evangelize mankind. In the primitive ages of

Christianity, it sought every where to proclaim the name of the Lord Jesus, to plant the standard of his cross, and to advance his cause amongst men, and great was their success. On the day of Pentecost, three thousand were converted to God; afterwards the number that believed was five thousand; then a company of priests were converted to God; and so great was the progress of the gospel, that it is said, *daily there were added to the church such as should be saved*. Had its triumphs continued, the only altar left would have been the altar of the cross—that altar which sanctifies both the gift and the giver. Righteousness, knowledge, and peace would have been every where spread, and for centuries of years the millennium would have dawned on our world; but the work of God was stayed in its course. Corruptions crept into the church of Christ, and the glory of the cross became obscure.

At the period of the Reformation, however, the church of Christ again awoke from her slumbers, and made aggressive efforts to fulfil her high and sacred commission; and the word of God went flying abroad in every direction, conquering and to conquer, subduing men's hearts to God, renovating their tempers, and assimilating them to the image of God.

Since that time, the gospel has been adding to its triumphs. It has met men by the wayside, and on the tempest-tossed ocean—afar off in distant climes, and amidst the hum of the busy city, and brought them to Christ, possessed them with a glorious hope of immortal life, and trained them up for the realms of everlasting purity and bliss.

But the gospel has achieved its most illustrious triumphs in the age in which we live. Philippo, in his enchanting publication, says that “in Jamaica two hundred thousand have been savingly converted to God, and merged into the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness. In the Western Archipelago the seed is abundantly springing up. The icy regions of the north are gladdened by the genial influence of the truth. The islands of the Southern Sea have received His law. The mighty superstitions of India are tottering before the presence of the cross; and in Burmah and China, with their teeming millions, the death-like silence which has reigned for ages, is disturbed by the footsteps of Him, who as he advances creates all things new. The enemy has been driven from some of those strong holds which have been deemed impregnable, and many a field of

arduous conflict is strewed with the weapons of opposition, and the emblems of success. In every quarter of the globe, vice and malice and rage have fled before the servants of the Prince of Light, and the graces of the Spirit have sprung up in their path. Through their instrumentality tens of thousands have cried,—Other lords have had dominion over us, but by the might of thy name we will make mention only of thee. The evidence of the truth of his religion, and the spiritual glory of his kingdom, in large masses has accumulated along their line. Unbelief has grown pale, and conviction begun to light up the universal mind, and death and hell have recorded in all but innumerable instances, on their mysterious page, the splendid triumphs of his cross, and have added imperishable lustre to his crown.”

The work of God is still extending, and brighter prospects are dawning upon the church and the world. “A spirit of enquiry has been awakened, and millions on millions are waiting for his law. Lamps have been lighted here and there, which serve to reveal the surrounding gloom. The fields are white unto the harvest; the ripening corn invites the sickle; it bends beneath its weight; it waves before the breeze.

The season will soon be past, and the opportunity ended ; but where a host of hands should seize the spoil, a single reaper only appears here and there breast high, mocked by the seeming hopelessness of his work, and dispirited by the loneliness of his position. From the borders of China, extending along many of the shores of the eastern continent, and even to the interior of Africa, has the light of life extended. In almost every portion of the globe, churches and schools are rising up, and landmarks of missionary progress, forming a beautiful contrast to the surrounding barrenness and desolation—*churches built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.* In almost every direction we are presented with increasingly brightening prospects : in some parts of the field, God is not only with his servants, but it may emphatically be said that he has gone before them. The ground appears already ploughed up to their hands : they have nothing to do but to cast in the seed, and immediately it vegetates, and brings forth an abundant harvest. To change the allusion—no sooner is an attack made on the powers of darkness than a retreat is sounded, and all that seems required are the

re-inforcements of men, and increased pecuniary supplies, to occupy the said ground."

"Had I a thousand tongues, and a thousand limbs, and a thousand lives," said Dr. Haweis, "I would employ them all in spreading the triumphs of Christ's cross. In the church of Christ they are to be found, and they ought all to be consecrated to the service of the Saviour. Multitudes are perishing for lack of knowledge. The cry of the man of Macedonia is wafted across the ocean by every breeze, *Come over and help us*; and greater facilities now exist for the spread of the gospel than at any former period. Commerce has been greatly extended amongst the nations of the earth, and there is scarcely a spot where the Christian may not make his influence felt, through the channels which enterprise has opened. By the ingenuity of man, the speed with which his passage from nation to nation, and continent to continent, is effected, is increasing almost every day; linking the kindred of the earth more closely together, and forming them into one great neighbourhood, through which men may pass and repass, influencing each other, and being influenced themselves. And by the mighty engine of the press, men are enabled to send their thoughts, as on

the wings of the wind, to speak to thousands of their fellow-men in the remotest parts of the earth. Brethren, by the facilities at your command for the spread of divine truth—by the dangers of those who are ready to perish—by your obligations to the Saviour for his dying love—by the examples of holy men of God in their devotedness to the cause of Christ—by the success realized, and the cheering assurances given us as to the final and universal triumph of the gospel, we call upon you to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty—to enter the field of the world at its thousand gates—and, as if the salvation of the world depended on your individual exertions, to seek to plant the cross of Christ between men and ruin, to cry, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*, and to seek to snatch them from the fangs of the destroyer.” And *whatsoever your hands find to do, do it with all your might*. Life’s day is a short day, and will soon come to a close. When the late Dr. Stewart, of Liverpool, was lying on the bed of death, a friend called to see him; he found him asleep, but on awaking, the doctor cast his eyes on him, and with all the energy he could command, said, “Work, work, work,

friend, while it is day ; the night cometh when no man can work." "I will, I will, I will," said his friend. A greater than Dr. Stewart has spoken to us these words. In obedience to his command let us labour in his service to the last moment of our existence, and to the last vibration of our hearts. *Blessed is the man whom when his Lord cometh, he shall find so doing.*

"O ! could my heart, flown to my tongue,
Dissolve itself in sound ;
Or did my harp, now all unstrung,
With dulcet notes abound ;
I'd strike a chord should chain the mind,
And draw forth tears like rain,
When I am in the ground."

CHAPTER X.

ON THE CONSUMMATION OF THE GOSPEL.

IN the Mirror of the Gospel we see its consummation. This is the subjection of the world to the dominion of Christ. Jesus is king of Zion. Jehovah has given to him universal empire. His kingdom has been set up. It is daily widening in its boundaries, and gaining fresh triumphs over its foes. It is destined to spread

until it embraces every empire, kingdom, continent, and island. It is to swallow up all others. *And the nation and kingdom that will not serve him shall perish.*

This consummation will be most glorious. "All the scenes of social, commercial, and domestic life," says Dr. Raffles, "will be purified by principles of piety, integrity, and peace. Men will live and love as brethren, and the battle of the warrior, with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, will be a tale of other times. Cruelty and tyranny and oppression will be unknown; and slavery, yea, that execrable name slavery—that foulest blot in human nature—slavery under every name and form and aspect, will retire, with its lashes, fetters, and trammels, to the hell from whence it came. The slave-ship and the pirate will no more traverse the deep, to pollute its waters with their streams of blood. Men will universally respect the rights of their fellow men. The law of kindness will dwell on every tongue, and the meekness of Christ beam in every eye. Over all, the tree of life will extend its branches, and cast its shades, and all the members of the world's family gather around it in harmony and love, and eat the delicious fruit, and realise the healing virtue of its leaves."

This consummation is certain. God has affirmed it in his holy word. It is said, *All kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him : men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed ; from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles ; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering ; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts ; and the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom : and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

“The issue, therefore, of the struggle, we cannot allow,” says Philipppo, “to be doubtful. Mere human schemes, however wisely planned and vigorously worked, are liable to be defeated. They hang on contingencies that no forethought can prevent, and may be thrown into confusion by casualties incident to the profoundest purposes of finite minds. But the designs of the servants of the Almighty, moulded according to the directions of his word, and executed in humble dependence on his grace, are in sympa-

thy with the counsels of the blessed God, and run parallel with his thoughts of love and mercy towards sinful men. They enlist on their side the perfections of Him whom no stratagems can baffle, and against whom no combination can succeed. Apparently insuperable difficulties may stand in their way, and they may meet with powerful adversaries and temporary defeat. But why do the heathen rage? He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision. His counsel shall stand. He will do all his pleasure."

And to this consummation the transactions of the present day are all tending with the minuteness and force of a law. Every creature is looking forward, with earnest expectation and desire, to it; and ere long it will burst in all the effulgence of glory on our world.

“ Oh ! word of truth to cheer
The waiting pilgrim's ear ;
A light to trusting faith for ever given.
Stretching from sea to sea,
That kingdom yet shall be,
Tinging the clouds of earth with rays from heaven.
Lo ! to each distant shore,
With darkness brooding o'er,
The message of eternal life is borne.
O'er India's idol fanes,

Where darkness ever reigns,
Soon shall be ushered in the glorious morn.

Where sculptured fragments lie
Beneath the glowing sky,
Where dark oblivion spreads a murky pall,
O'er-mastering time holds sway,
And slowly to decay
The heathen temples each to ruin fall !

Tribes of the desert, far,
Behold, the morning star
With beams of ever-living truth shall shine ;
And every mountain dell
The chorus glad shall swell,
And spread the tidings of that peace divine.

For he shall ever reign,
And death, and sin, and pain
Shall cease ; his promise ever sure shall be.
Hasten, O Lord, the hour
When all shall own thy power,
And humbly-waiting souls may thy salvation see."

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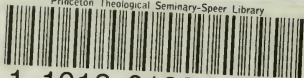
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